DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 116 141 CS 002 305

TITLE	Reading in Virginia. Volume 3, No. 2.
INSTITUTION	Virginia State Reading Association.
PUB DATE	Mar 75
NOTE	35p.
EDRS PRICE	MP-$0.76 HC-$1.95 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS	Content Reading; Elementary Secondary Education; Individualized Reading; *Language Arts; Parent Participation; Performance Contracts; Phonics; *Reading Instruction; Reading Readiness; Reading Tests; Vision; Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS	*Virginia

ABSTRACT

The contents of this issue consist of articles concerning various facets of the teaching of reading. A guest article by Patrick Groff is entitled "Phonics Teachers: Join the Consumer Movement." Other articles focus on volunteers in public schools, the high risk child, the importance of good vision, the testing of tests, the predictability of poor readers, parental involvement, individualization through contracts, reading-type instruction, teaching prereading skills, student teams for tutoring, the rural high school and content reading, teacher incentive payments, and a perceptual-psychomotor-vocational reading project. (JM)

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READING IN VIRGINIA

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MAY 1974

CS 202 305

Published by

Virginia State Reading Association

March, 1975

READING IN VIRGINIA

Volume III, No. 1, March, 1975

Reading in Virginia is published once each year by the Virginia State Reading Association, an affiliate of the International Reading Association, as a service to its members. Membership in the VSRA includes a subscription.

Membership information and information concerning submitting of articles to the editors is found elsewhere in the journal.

POLICY STATEMENT: **Reading in Virginia** is a publication of the VSRA. The contents do not necessarily imply endorsement by the VSRA or by the editors.

FUTURE DATES TO REMEMBER:

May 13-16, 1975: International Reading Association Convention, New York

March 24-27, 1976: VSRA Convention, Twin Bridges, Arlington, Virginia

March 16-19, 1977: VSRA Convention, Roanoke, Virginia

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FOREWARD

The Virginia State Reading Association shall be a professional organization for individuals who are genuinely concerned with the improvement of all aspects of reading programs and teaching procedures, and with providing adequate guidance in all situations in which reading serves as a vital aid to learning.

BYLAWS, Article II, Section I

To encourage the study of reading instruction at all educational levels throughout all of Virginia.....

To disseminate to the various local councils knowledge regarding trends, research, and new developments in the teaching of reading .....

To stimulate and promote research in developmental, creative, corrective and remedial reading .....

To promote mutual understanding and cooperative work among educators in the elementary grades, junior high schools, high schools, special areas, junior colleges, colleges, universities, and leadership positions .....

These are four of the purposes of the Virginia State Reading Association. It is the hope of the VSRA that this, the third official publication of the association, will help in accomplishing these purposes.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

This issue of **Reading in Virginia** is being mailed to each of the 3500 members of the VSRA!

A new feature of **Reading in Virginia** this year is the appearance of a guest article, written by Dr. Patrick Groff of San Diego State University, San Diego, California. Dr. Groff, who has published approximately 100 articles, was invited by the editor to write an article for the reading teachers of Virginia. His articles are usually provocative and stimulating -- his article for Virginia teachers is no exception!

The fourth volume of **Reading in Virginia** will be published in March, 1976. The deadline for submitting articles for this issue will be January 1, 1976. Guidelines for submitting an article are:

1. Any topic related to reading may be discussed. It can be a research article or it can be an article providing information on a reading project, reading series, reading materials and equipment, successful methods and techniques used in teaching reading, etc.
2. Number of words: Approximately 500, more or less.
3. Please type your article -- double spaced. Please type on only one side of each sheet.
4. Please sign your name, title, and address (school and home). Please give your article a title.

A new feature of next year's issue will be an article written by YOU! Don't procrastinate -- write your article **now**. The only way teachers can find out about reading in Virginia is to write an article for **Reading in Virginia**. Please submit your article to:

Dr. Robert D. Gibbons, Editor
Mr. J. Lee Pemberton, III, Assistant Editor
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"Cover:"

The VSRA is proud to send its congratulations to Roanoke County's Hardy Road Elementary School faculty and students. A story reprinted below from **The World-News** tells what happened! Mrs. Mary Helen Brubeck, Supervisor of Elementary Reading and Language Arts for Roanoke County, is President of the Roanoke Valley Reading Council and is also a member of the Board of Directors of the VSRA.

Special congratulations to three people in particular who were most responsible for making the reading program such a success: Richard F. Stone, Principal; Mrs. Deanna Gordon, Assistant Principal; and Mrs. Alice Hall, Reading Specialist.

Hardy Road Elementary School
1200 Hardy Road
Vinton, Virginia 24179

The World-News

Roanoke, Virginia, Thursday, December 5, 1974

County school receives reading award

Roanoke County's Hardy Road Elementary School today received the first award presented nationally for its implementation and use of the Listen-Look-Learn reading program.

The award was presented by Robert Ruegg of New York City, director of marketing for Educational Development Laboratories (EDL), a subsidiary of McGraw-Hill Book Co. EDL developed the program.

School Supt. Arnold Burton told the pupils and teachers who were assembled in the gymnasium, "We are being honored for perhaps the outstanding reading program in the nation."

EDL's Listen-Look-Learn program stresses audio-visual aids to prepare pupils for reading. Ruegg emphasized this, saying, "The purpose, above all, is to be able to go to a book and read."

Mary Helen Brubeck, supervisor of elementary reading and language arts for the county schools, said the EDL program is used thoughout the school system at all grade levels.

She said its purpose is to teach reading skills in a systematic and progressive order. She said the audio-visual aids help maintain year-to-year consistency in the instruction of phonics and other skills.

She said the program is flexible so each child progresses at his or her own rate. Pupil progress charts help when children transfer to other schools within the county or attend summer school.

Mrs. Brubeck said the county schools have exceeded the state and national averages in reading scores. She said Hardy Road received the award because its teacners and administrators used space at the school to make the program effective.

Mrs. Brubeck said that because of the way the program has been organized at Hardy Road, all children are able to go to the reading center to use the audio-visual aids each day. In other schools, she said, children often are able to use the aids only two to three times a week.

The plaque, which designates the school an "Exemplary Listen-Look-Learn Site," will be displayed in the reading center.

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PHONICS TEACHERS: JOIN THE CONSUMER MOVEMENT!

Dr. Patrick Groff
Professor of Education
San Diego State University
San Diego, California 92115

(Editor's Note: Dr. Groff was asked to write a guest article for **Reading in Virginia** by the editor.)

Good consumerism demands potential buyers be wary of claims made for a product's virtue. When this attitude is consistently held by the consumer the inducements of any product or service, first of all, is greeted with suspicion. The wise buyer never relaxes his skepticism as to whether an article or service in question is genuine. It has been shown one can begin to develop these habits of mind even with elementary school children.

The requirements of good consumerism need to be placed upon phonics writings for several reasons. Over the years promises have been made to teachers to put "phonics in proper prespective" and to separate the "fact and fiction about phonics." These pledges of a reform for phonics (that knowledge about certain sound-spelling relationships a child can learn to use to help him acquire the abilities to read and spell) have rarely been kept, however. Hundreds of research studies have failed to eradicate the critical errors found in modern phonics writings. Despite the assurances from writers to the contrary, bad judgments and misstatements about phonics rage on.

Despite the assurances from writers to the contrary, bad judgments and misstatements about phonics rage on.

As with other poorly-done products one looks for the reason to explain such a shoddy state of affairs. Phonics writers are different from manufacturers in this respect. That is, the latter insist that accidents, an indifferent work force, bad supply systems, etc., account for any of their low-grade merchandise. Phonics writers make up no such excuses.

Instead, they proclaim almost triumphantly there is no best way to teach phonics, and therefore no best way to describe it, of course. The mark of a successful writer of phonics to date, accordingly, has been how well he can portray, without derogatory comment, almost anything that anyone, anytime, has said about the subject. These writers claim with pride to be "eclectic" in their judgments about phonics. This attitude on their part finds a hospitable union with teachers u n s u r e about phonics. Teachers find relief, at least, with the reasoning that since phonics "experts" admittedly are not sure, who can say when and where a phonics teacher goes wrong?

. . . phonics writers have accepted rumor or hearsay about phonics as being in the same league with research findings.

Stated simply, this eclectic approach means phonics writers have accepted rumor or hearsay about phonics as being in the same league with research findings. The stubbornness with which they maintain this dubious balance cannot be dismissed as simple eccentricity, unfortunately. A more deep-seated cause of this often is the writer's efforts to get his papers on phonics published. The publishers of longer works on phonics, particularly those of basal reader teachers' manuals, persist in their dislike for new manuscripts that read too differently from those already in print. To continue to offer errors about phonics therefore can be read as expediency on the writer's part. The writer of a truly new phonics also finds many fellow teacher educators are offended by his work. These are professors of reading as comfortably satisfied with the traditional information on phonics as are the basal reader publishers.

Other factors aid the perpetuation of the wrong-headedness of phonics eclecticism. The small amount of knowledge of phonemics (sounds) and graphemics (spellings) some writers have, as is amply evident in their writings, doubtless contributes to their "anything goes" phonics. Such writers also often use a "cut and paste" procedure in making up a phonics book. Books on phonics written in this manner are nothing more than rearrangements and or restatements of previous ones. Obviously there is little need here to venture into linguistics information that pertains, or into current research findings for additional, up-to-date material. A final refuge of the eclectic phonics writer is his understanding that research about the teaching of reading at points is inconclusive. Since the research is not perfect, he reasons, I am privileged to use any unverified testimony about phonics I choose.

The results of this eclectic approach to phonics offers little support to the claim that the age of truth has emerged for this matter. Quite to the reverse, the perpetuation of this notion makes it inevitable that phonics writings remain full of mistakes. Some of these are slight errors, often rather harmless, even amusing in their erracticism (especially to linguists who have begun to comment on them). Some of the other defects which are presently noticeable cannot be taken so lightly, nor be so easily excused, however. These are sober statements, earnestly put forth, that appear to have a ring of truth about them. It is with these kinds of faults in phonics that the true dangers lies. These graver offenses to what research into reading methodology and into linguistics say about phonics must include the following dozen items:

1. The claim that most school children to be "ready" for phonics instruction should first participate in visual and auditory "readiness" activities.
2. The notion that the child must know a certain number of "sight" words before he begins his phonics learnings.
3. The advice that children be taught to read words as isolated entities rather than always in sentences.
4. The failure to consider the different problems for teaching phonics that the different parts of speech pose.
5. An avoidance of a consideration of the relationship a child's dialect (that particular style of speech he uses whether this is standard for his speech region or not) should have on the kind of instruction in phonics he receives.
6. The support of the way the dictionary syllabicates words, and the use of this kind of syllabication in phonics.
7. A lack of comment as to the morphophonemic nature of English spelling, and how this morphophonemic spelling (e.g., **sign** vs. **signal**) helps the child recognize words.
8. The assumption that polysyllabic words are as proper for teaching beginning phonics as are monosyllabic words.
9. The recommendation that vowel spelling-to-sound relationships be taught as isolated sounds or as consonant-vowel combinations (e.g., **ha, pi**).
10. The proposal that children should learn to mark the

accented syllable in polysyllabic words as an aid to word recognition.

11. The neglect to make a clear distinction as to the influence phonics has on learning to read as versus learning to spell (it has much more influence on the former).
12. The trust that writers place in the value of popular standardized tests as tools to evaluate children's knowledge of phonics.

It is possible to rid phonics of these and others of its present faults only if the tactics of intelligent consumerism are applied by teachers. Rather than accepting phonics writings at face value teachers must now be ready to ask some probing questions of the writers of phonics. Among these should be:

On what evidence do you base your advice? What is the research that supports your statements? Knowing of the linguistic phenomena involved, is it logical to believe children learn phonics best the way you say they do? How much of the conclusion that you make about some given aspect of phonics do you base on hearsay? What kinds of hearsay do you accept as useful in making decisions about phonics teaching?

A Beginning Bibliography for Phonics Consumers
(Numbers refer to items listed above)

1. Robert Dykstra. "Auditory Discrimination Abilities and Beginning Reading Achievement." **Reading Research Quarterly**, 1 (1966) 5-34. Ruth Waugh and Zana Watson. "Visual Perception and Reading." **Education** 91 (1971) 266-269.

2. Patrick Groff. "The Topsy-Turvy World of Sight Words." **Reading Teacher**, 27 (1974) 572-578.

3. Rose-Marie Weber. "First-Graders' Use of Grammatical Context in Reading." **Basic Studies on Reading** (Harry Levin and Joanna P. Williams, editors). New York: Basic Books, 1970. pp. 74-89. Kenneth S. Goodman. "A Linguistic Study of Cues and Miscues in Reading." **Elementary English**, 42 (1965) 639-643.

. . . Teachers must now be ready to ask some probing questions of the writers of phonics.

4. Fred Brengelman. **The English Language**. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970.

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6. Patrick Groff. "Dictionary Syllabication - How Useful?" **Elementary School Journal**, 72 (1971) 107-117.

7. Richard L. Venezky. **The Structure of English Orthography**. The Hague: Mouton, 1970

8. Patrick Groff. "Long versus Short Words in Beginning Reading." **Reading World**. in press.

9. Richard E. Wylie and Donald D. Durrell. "Teaching Vowels through Phonograms." **Elementary English**, 47 (1970) 787-791.

10. Patrick Groff. "Teach or Not Teach Accents?" **Elementary School Journal** 62 (1962) 457-460.

11. Gus P. Plessas and Dorothea M. Ladley. "Some Implications of Spelling and Reading Research." **Elementary English**, 42 (1965) 142-145.

12. Carol Winkley. "What Do Diagnostic Tests Really Diagnose?" **Diagnostic Viewpoints in Reading** (Robert E. Liebert, editor). Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1971, pp. 64-80.

One of the urgent needs in reading is to develop partnerships between reading teachers and reading researchers. Many reading researchers now realize that the experience and creativity of teachers is an important resource for their understanding of the processes of reading. We also know that as teachers grow in their awareness of new discoveries in reading, programs of reading instruction can be improved and amplified."

Dr. John T. Guthrie
Director of Research
International Reading Association

VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN HENRICO COUNTY

Mrs. Jennie J. DeGenaro
Coordinator
Volunteers in Public Schools
Henrico County Public Schools
Holladay Elementary School
Richmond, Virginia 23228

(Editor's Note: Mrs. DeGenaro's first article for **Reading in Virginia** was published last year; this is her second article!)

The Volunteers in Public Schools in Henrico County has two major goals. The first is to train volunteer tutors to assist in ameliorating deficits in learning disabled students. The second goal is to train volunteers to construct educational games and teaching devices. Both goals were met during the 1973-74 school year.

The Tutorial Program

Volunteers were recruited from among the patrons of the Henrico County Public Schools. There were no educational requirements for volunteers; however, many tutors had bachelors and masters degrees in education as well as in other fields. Two options were given the volunteers. They could either participate in the tutorial program or in the media center. The majority of the volunteers selected the tutorial program, although a greater commitment was required of tutors. Several volunteers worked in both areas.

> Thirty - eight volunteer tutors were trained and thirty-six of those trained completed the program in June.

Fifteen hours of group in-service training was provided the volunteer tutors prior to their assignments in the schools. Monthly in-service programs were conducted throughout the school year. In addition, the coordinator of the program was "on call" to assist individual tutors in testing and in tutorial sessions. Each tutor worked two or three times a week with her tutee in hourly sessions.

In-service was provided by the professional staff of the Henrico County Schools. Psychologists, administrators, teachers (learning disability, resource and classroom), guidance counselors, and supervisors contributed their expertise to this program. Presentations were video-taped for future use and one recruitment film was made.

In-service training included practical techniques for formal and informal assessments. Various methods for teaching reading and the use of reading games were included in the training. In addition, professionalism was stressed.

Thirty-eight volunteers tutors were trained and thirty-six of those trained completed the program in June. Several additional volunteers joined the VIPS during the school year.

> The commitment on the part of the tutee was to demonstrate fifty percent greater achievement in the reading area than he had achieved previously. Of all the students tutored, 94.7 percent of the students made, or exceeded, the commitment for achievement.

In analyzing the data, it appears that tutors can make a substantial contribution in the education of learning disabled students. The necessary components appear to be:

1. Volunteers who are willing to participate in a training program.
2. Meaningful in service which is geared to the needs of volunteers and includes providing tutors with:
   A. The skills necessary to assess areas of strengths and weaknesses.
   B. Remedial techniques, or strategies, to help erase deficit areas while capitalizing on the students' strengths.
   C. Continuous, on-going professional guidance.
   D. An individualized, prescriptive approach to tutorial sessions to include professional help in writing prescriptions.
3. Parent involvement:
   A. Prior to a tutor being assigned a student, the parents of the tutees were consulted and parental permission obtained.
   B. A morning coffee for the parents was held. The VIPS program was explained and the parents were given an opportunity to meet their child's tutor. Techniques for helping children at home were explained at this meeting.

The Media Center

Volunteers were recruited from the community to participate in this program. The majority who volunteered were patrons of the Henrico County Public Schools. Many of the tutees' mothers volunteered to help in the media center. One male participated, a policeman during his off-duty hours.

In-service was provided by the program coordinator at the beginning of each weekly session. Instruction was followed by the construction of the materials demonstrated.

Various word games and teaching devices were made. Adaptable game boards, which were used for multi-level activities were found to be especially useful. Packets, complete with instructional objectives, were made for various word attack skills. The material was used by the tutors primarily; however, it was available to teachers as well.

> One male participated, a policeman during his off-duty hours.

Extra Dividends

Two booklets were produced as an outgrowth of tutors and teachers working together. "Flip for Phonics - - Tutors, Mothers and Others" was written by the Coordinator and illustrated by a Media Volunteer. "Raise Your Game Quotient" was a county-wide project. One hundred fifty games were contributed by teachers and tutors and printed by Henrico County's printing department. Tutors and teachers have copies for their use during the 1974-75 school year. In addition, volunteers use the book to construct games and teaching devices.

Evaluation

The VIPS in Henrico County Schools met the goals and

objectives as outlined in the original proposal. As stated earlier, 94.7 percent of the tutees met or exceeded the "successful growth" criterion as established in the reading areas. A total of 3,959 man hours were contributed by the volunteers the first year.

The rate of attrition is usually high among volunteers. This was not the case in Henrico County. Many volunteers returned to serve in the program in the 1974-75 school year. Parent involvement was accomplished and these volunteers are some of the supporters of the goals of the Henrico County Public Schools.

The work of the volunteers was such that more volunteer tutors are requested than are available. Principals and teachers were asked to evaluate their tutors' effectiveness, and overall they rated the volunteers "superior" and requested the return of their particular tutors the following school year.

FLIP FOR PHONICS -- FOR TUTORS, MOTHERS AND OTHERS and RAISE YOUR GAME QUOTIENT booklets were published.

The VIPS in Henrico was included in a booklet on volunteer programs in the United States and was presented at the International Reading Association's annual convention in New Orleans in 1974. A program description is expected to appear in the **American Public School Systems Yearbook** for 1974-1975.

(The Volunteers in Public Schools in Henrico County commenced in the fall of 1973 and was made possible under a Title VI-B grant. Henrico County Schools assumed full responsibility for the 1974-75 school year. The program is under the direction of Dr. Morton Bradman, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. Forty-three new volunteer tutors completed the first ten hours of in-service training on September 25, 1974.)

"It was still early when I reached school, one morning recently. I was surprised to see a youngster hovering near the door. 'It's locked,' he offered sadly as I tried the knob. I began to fumble for my keys. Immediately he brightened. 'You're a teacher!' he announced with both surprise and pleasure. 'What makes you think that?' I asked, amused and not a little pleased to think my station in life should be regarded with such delight. He hesitated not a moment, but said softly and with respect, 'You have the key.'

"I was promptly humbled as well as overwhelmed at the magnitude of that simple statement, of the implication and the responsibility involved by merely having a 'key.'

"This was perhaps the most pertinent statement directed toward me in my entire teaching career. It started me thinking . . ."

Susan Schilling

HELPING THE "HIGH RISK CHILD" IN COLONIAL HEIGHTS

Mrs. Suzanne Elliott
Co-ordinator of Special Education and Remedial Reading
Colonial Heights Public Schools
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Colonial Heights, Virginia 23834

(Editor's Note: Mrs. Elliott is on the Board of Directors of the Virginia State Reading Association.)

Reading is a topic that is of concern to everyone. Children entering first grade want to "learn to read", and their parents and teachers want them to read also. Many children encounter the experience of learning to read with little difficulty, but what about those children who have difficulty? Because there have always been children who experience difficulty in their exposure to the reading process, programs other than those offered in the classroom situation have been developed.

Our school system started a program in remedial reading under a Title I grant and now supports the total program with local monies. This remedial reading program offers supplemental instruction in small group situations with the goal of getting children to read at their ability levels. Children's ability levels were chosen instead of a grade level because some children's abilities are above the grade in which they are enrolled, while others have abilities that are below grade level. In addition, there is a learning disabilities program which works in conjunction with the remedial reading project.

Many children who receive the benefits of the remedial reading program also attend the resource program in learning disabilities.

Teachers in these two programs receive their students from referrals from classroom teachers, parents, the school psychologist, and other school agents. Students referred for remedial reading are given a standardized test and informal reading inventories. If a child shows a difference between his ability and his achievement, he is considered for the program. An individual ability test is administered if there is a question concerning this difference. Small groups with a maximum of eight students are then scheduled.

Many children who receive the benefits of the remedial reading program also attend the resource program in learning disabilities. The procedure for entering the learning disabilities program is more structured and follows the "State Guidelines for the Administration of a Special Education Program in Virginia." The procedure includes testing with the **Slingerland Screening Test for the Identification of Children with Learning Disabilities**, psychological testing, a medical report and a social history.

Children who show characteristics of a "high risk child" have been given the benefits of an early intervention program . . .

Special teachers as well as classroom teachers work very closely together to co-ordinate an individual program for each of the students. Classroom teachers inform the resource teachers of each child's academic progress and weaknesses. Children in these resource programs are presented reading instruction on their achievement level within the regular classroom and are graded according to the effort and advancement on this level. When academic subjects are discussed in the resource classes, they are discussed on a supplemental basis. If a child has a problem in the area of auditory discrimination, for example, the learning disabilities teacher works on developing auditory skills while the remedial reading teacher may work on building a sight vocabulary and configuration skills.

Individual programs, small pupil-teacher ratios and a wide variety of materials are used in these programs and have contributed to their success. Since Colonial Heights has had the benefit of both remedial reading and learning disabilities programs, those children who were facing problems in reading have improved greatly. Also, the children who show characteristics of a "high risk child" have been given the benefits of an early intervention program that has as its goal making learning a successful and happy experience.

THERE'S MORE TO SEEING THAN MEETS THE EYE

American Optometric Association
7000 Chippewa Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63119

(Editor's Note: The following news release is published with the permission of the American Optometric Association.)

"Why Johnny's eyes are perfect, he has 20 / 20 vision," exclaimed his surprised mother when the teacher suggested he have his eyes examined.

Mother was right. Johnny had perfectly sharp vision for seeing at a distance. But teacher, in suspecting that his vision was not normal for schoolwork, was right too!

A child may score 20 / 20 on the Snellen eyechart test and still have a significant visual handicap, the American Optometric Association advises. The eyechart measures visual acuity but tells nothing of the indirect fields of vision, the eye-muscle action, speed of seeing, the effort needed to see, or the ability to see efficiently at near point.

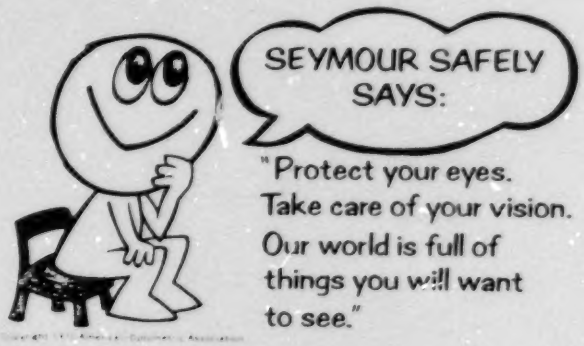
The term "20 / 20" refers to the size of letters Johnny could read from 20 feet away. These letters are about $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch high. Most youngsters can read letters of 20 / 20 size, although some may need lenses to do so.

If the letters must be made larger in order to be identified, the denominator of the fraction becomes larger. The higher the denominator, the more blurred the vision is for seeing at a distance.

A child whose vision is 20 / 40 would require letters twice the size of those necessary for 20 / 20 vision, while 20 / 100 letters would be five times as large. This does not mean that 20 / 100 is five times worse than 20 / 20. The visual impairment is greater but not in direct proportion to the size of the fraction which expresses it.

> Why Johnny's eyes are perfect, he has 20 / 20 vision.

However, the ability to see clearly and effortlessly at a distance is only one of the visual skills a child needs to read, study and learn effectively. For example, a child with poor binocular coordination -- the ability to focus and point his eyes as a team -- may be classified as a "reading" or "behavior" problem by teachers, even though his visual acuity is 20 / 20. Yet once the vision problem is detected, such students can be taught by trained personnel to aim and focus their eyes properly through visual training, the 16,000-member association advises.

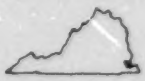


Because children often do not realize they have a vision problem, parents and teachers should watch for signs which may indicate a need for vision care. Some such symptoms to watch for are: the child losing his place while reading . . . holding reading material closer than normal . . . frequent headaches . . . the tendency to rub his eyes . . . or the turning of the head to one side while reading.

Most important of all, parents should have a child's eyes periodically examined by a vision care specialist -- especially at the first hint that the child is not measuring up to his potential in school.

Among the skills a child needs for maximum school achievement are:

1. To see clearly and effortlessly at distance and near with each eye.
2. To use both eyes together to see both near and far objects.
3. To move the eyes easily from one place to another.
4. To change focus from far objects to near print.
5. To identify objects by their shape, size and color.
6. To recognize the size and distance relationship between objects.
7. To have good eye-hand coordination.



The American Optometric Association will be glad to send a free copy of each of several pamphlets and news releases to each of the VSRA members. If you are interested, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the:

Public Information Division
American Optometric Association
7000 Chippewa Street
St. Louis, MO 63119

Publications of the AOA include:

A Teacher's Guide to Vision Problems
Do You Know These Facts About Vision and School Achievement?
The Place of Vision in Child Behavior
Your Child's First Vision Examination
Schematic Section of the Human Eye
Seymour Safely Flyer (see preceeding page)
There's More to Seeing Than Meets the Eye
Nipping Vision Problems in the Bud
Muscles Affect Ability to See
Good Marks for Good Vision
Eye Care - - Do You?

Mr. J. William Doswell is Administrative Director of the Virginia Optometric Association. His address is P. O. Box 4586, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

A child may score 20 20 on the Snellen eyechart test and still have a significant visual handicap. (How does YOUR school test pupils' vision? Is the Snellen the ONLY test you use?????)

TESTING THE TESTS

Mr. Edward Grimsley
Editor of the Editorial Page
Richmond Times-Dispatch
Richmond, Virginia 23219

(Editor's Note: The following editorial, appearing in the **Richmond Times-Dispatch** on Saturday, October 26, 1974, is published with the permission of Mr. Grimsley. The editorial is being reprinted because of its appropriateness to the discussion by the public concerning reading test scores of students in Virginia. The editor believes this editorial is one of the more objective statements written so far about the controversy of reading test scores.)

The State Department of Education's release last July of the results of achievement tests administered to pupils the previous fall stirred a great deal of concern across the Commonwealth. The average Virginia scores on reading and mathematics tests appeared to be continuing a trend in recent years of skidding even farther below the national average of 50.

To some observers, this may have been evidence that the state's "Standards of Quality" for public education were a flop. Taxpayers were paying more, but pupils were learning less. "Quality's Up, Scores Down," was the headline in a Norfolk newspaper.

". . . concern ought to be tempered by much caution in using the standardized tests as absolute measures of school "quality."

Improved teaching of the basic skills is an objective this page has supported on many occasions. There are abundant indications here and elsewhere in the nation that the schools need to return to reading and computation and forget some of the exotic experiments that have been palmed off on them as innovation. Nevertheless, concern ought to be tempered by much caution in using the standardized tests as absolute measures of school "quality." This cautionary side of the story needs telling.

Some of the limitations of test interpretation were lucidly explained this month to the House Appropriations Committee in a staff report prepared by Cecil F. Jones. In the first place, the report reminded the legislators, the recent test results showed that one performance objective of the Standards of Quality - - that students achieve at or above their ability level - - was actually being met nicely. In more than 95 per cent of the school divisions, average achievement scores equaled or topped average ability (or "intelligence") scores.

However, the fact that both ability and achievement scores are below the national average and falling remains a source of legitimate concern. Some of the explanations offered by the report are as follows:

* The harmful impact of busing. It is estimated that 10 to 15 per cent of the public-school system's students have been withdrawn and placed in private schools in reaction to forced busing. Since these pupils come from homes affluent enough to pay for private schooling, it may be logical to presume that they come from backgrounds that stress and reward literacy and that their withdrawal lowers the pool of self-motivated learners.

* The extension of public education to children once neglected - - i.e., slow learners, the emotionally disturbed, retarded and disabled. This may have had a further depressing effect on test averages.

* Time lag. The Standards of Quality were not adopted until 1972 and were not fully financed until 1974. Hence, the results of tests given in October, 1973, could not reflect much of an impact of the new standards.

"The STEA would appear to have quite limited usefulness and little reason for being published

Most of the other caution flags raised by the report have to do with the nature of the tests themselves. Similar warning have been sounded by the Henrico County School Board, and, nationally, by George Weber, associate director of the Council for Basic Education. In summary, these are some of the possible flaws in the testing as culled from the above sources:

The State Department of Education switched last year to new tests - - the Short Test of Educational Ability (STEA) and the Science Research Associates (SRA) Achievement tests, both of which are published by SRA. These tests require only 30 minutes to take, as compared with 90 minutes for ones used previously, but they are far less comprehensive than the old tests. In the **Seventh Mental Measurements Yearbook** published in 1971, several experts criticize the tests sharply. For example, "The STEA would appear to have quite limited usefulness and little reason for being published" . . . "The principal advantage claimed for the STEA is the limited time required for its administration (but) this advantage was achieved at the cost of reduced reliability at some levels."

In another break with the past, the state's tests for 1973-74 were given at the beginning of the school year instead of in the spring as had been the custom. How many pupils are primed for serious test-taking promptly upon return from

summer vacation?

Additionally, the tests are geared to the curricula used in five Chicago suburban schools. There is a question whether the curricula there are compatible with those of Virginia schools. If not, the tests may not offer a fair measure of the performance of Virginia pupils.

As for the inadequacy of achievement testing generally, Weber notes that neither speaking nor writing, two important skills, are measured at all. Nor are interest in learning, initiative, imagination, morality, self-discipline, knowledge in the arts, foreign-language ability and physical development -- all wholesome objectives of schooling. Moreover, the reading tests often measure extent of general information known, not reading ability. Selection of vocabulary, pictures and subject matter may bias the tests in favor of some children, against others. Raking leaves and going to the beach may not be in the experience of an inner-city child.

The tests are geared to the curricula used in five Chicago suburban schools.

The purpose of this editorial is not to suggest that tests can offer no useful comparisons if drawn carefully, or that the schools should not be held accountable for producing demonstrable results. It is to suggest that standardized tests fall far short of perfection and Virginia may be using the least perfect of all for its needs. Dr. Woodrow W. Wilkerson, superintendent of public instruction, has acknowledged that the criticisms leveled against the current tests "have some degree of validity" and his department is studying the testing problem. Until further clarification is forthcoming, it may be well not to leap to too many conclusions.

READING AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Joseph B. Carnot
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How the teaching of reading can be made more effective and the results longer lasting has been a perplexing problem for decades. Since effective reading is the prerequisite to efficient assimilation of written material, many procedures for teaching reading have been intellectualized upon, researched, attempted and rejected. However, the question still remains and remains unanswered.

The improvement of reading programs in our schools is highly dependent upon the attitudes and priorities of the school administration. If the reading programs are to improve, then the impetus must come from the school administration. Also, the lack of improvement can be traced back to the lack of administrative involvement in curriculum and instruction. Also, the degree of involvement will vary with the size of the school division; consequently the smaller the size of the division the potential will be higher for administrative involvement in the improvement of the reading program.

High priority areas for funds also come from the school administrator and the priority areas are usually at the level the administrator taught before leaving the classrooms. Quite often surplus funds, if they do occur, are allocated to those areas where the administrator had taught, is knowledgeable and had positive attitudes.

If the reading programs are to improve, then the impetus must come from the school administration.

Today, reading and reading scores on achievement tests are local, state and national political issues. Increased funding has made reading a major concern of the citizens of our country. Reading is responsible for a large per cent of many school budgets. Consequently, reading is everyone's business and a big and profitable business it is.

School administrators must be knowledgeable and competent in the area of reading. The administrator is the instructional leader of the school and has the major responsibility in curriculum development and supervision. He must act as a change agent to improve instruction. However, administrators should not implement their will upon their staff as a benevolent dictator, but serve as a catalyst to bring together the best educators and available materials to improve instruction.

Also, the administrator must be a communications and a human relations specialist. The organization pattern of the school is not important, but what takes place in the classroom is. The administration must provide open channels of communication regarding reading as well as the total school program. After all, everyone has opinions on education and schools because everyone has at some time attended school.

We need to have a regular, scheduled reading time in our schools directed by competent reading teachers. We also need meaningful in-service programs designed to make reading teachers even more effective and subject teachers knowledgeable of reading skills. We need to better use our existing personnel and facilities. Parents can help their children and workshops should be organized by the administrators and staff to provide assistance. Also, students who are better readers can help those who are poorer readers. Pride and status should be given to these student aides.

Also, the RIF (Reading is FUNdamental), sponsored by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., program should be invested and used if possible. Local libraries and bookmobiles can provide considerable resources to supplement existing school facilities.

We . . . need meaningful in-service programs designed to make reading teachers even more effective . . .

Administrators and teachers should closely evaluate state testing programs and determine if these materials are really appropriate to the students of the division. Also, there should be extensive diagnosis of the reading program used in the division rather than the child.

In conclusion, school administrators must be knowledgeable of reading programs and bear the greatest responsibility for improving reading skills for the children of the school division. By providing instructional leadership and staff development the reading skills should improve. School administrators are in positions of authority to effectively institute programs and personnel which will be reflected in the improvement of the reading program.

READING IN THE CONTENT AREA

Dr. Joseph B. Carnot
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and

Mr. Daniel Farsaci
Union Springs Schools
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One of the most recent innovations in the field of reading improvement is reading in the content area. This approach unites the entire learning process through reading skills which are taught using the total school curriculum. This procedure involves subject area teachers in the entire learning process rather than simply as subject matter specialists.

The importance of complete funding cannot be over-emphasized because whenever money is inadequate, implementation of any program can be severely jeopardized. If the value of the program is not accepted by the staff and if the teachers feel that the program may not continue to be funded, in future years they will view it as no more than another innovation on its way out. The "Relax, it'll be gone in a year" syndrone will take effect leaving staff in no different attitude.

..IMPROVEMENT OF READING SKILLS IN THE CONTENT AREA MUST INCLUDE THE IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHER'S SKILLS. The most certain means of training teachers to achieve a specific goal is to develop a program wherein all members of the school unit, including administrators, receive the same training during the same year. The desired effect is to achieve maximum teaching efficiency and maximum reading effectiveness through a cooperative, coordinated effort on the part of the total staff. The most problematical feature of district in-service seems to be allocation of time to produce a viable workshop. The total amount of time to complete the workshop **SHOULD BE NOT LESS THAN FIVE DAYS FOR SEVEN HOURS PER DAY**. This span affords sufficient time to understand the basic philosophy of the program enables staff members to become involved in procedures of learning similar to those used in content-reading classroom, and time to develop content-reading materials to be used in their own classrooms at a later date. Also, alternative times within which to conduct reading in the content areas workshop will include after-school classes, summer programs, or regular school day workshops.

However, not all school systems can successfully incorporate reading in the content area. If the assessment of needs, viewed by administration and staff, dictates that such a program is desirable, the first step should be the procurement of funds necessary to develop and maintain optimal effectiveness of the program.

In conclusion, reading in the content area should operate in conjunction with the basal program through all grades. Through this procedure skills are taught not in isolation, but as an integral part of the reading-content area program. At the end of the basal program students should not end their reading classes but should have a natural continuum of content area reading replacing the developmental or remedial reading program.

PREDICTION: I KNOW WHO YOUR POOR READERS ARE!

Dr. Robert D. Gibbons
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Farmville, Virginia 23901

Beethoven was told he was hopeless as a composer. Walt Disney was told he had "no good ideas." Caruso was told he could not sing. Dr. Von Braun failed algebra and Winston Churchill failed the sixth form (grade). Eddie Richenbacker was told he would never make it as an airplane pilot. Fred Waring was once rejected for high school chorus. Ted Mack failed to "discover" Frank Sinantra. Even though Tiny Tim tried out ten different times for the Ted Mack Amateur Hour, Ted Mack never did "discover" him.

1. Question: What did all of these people have in common?

In a recent survey by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 4.8 per cent of today's secondary school students were tested as being illiterate (they could not read at a beginning fourth-grade level.) For the boys, the percent was 6.7; for the girls, 2.8. A further breakdown shows that 4.7 per cent of the white males and 20.5 per cent of the black males were tested as being illiterate. For the females, 1.7 per cent of the white females and 9.6 per cent of the black females were tested as being illiterate.

2. Question: What did this study have in common with Beethoven, etc.

More girls usually graduate from high school each year than boys. Girls usually have, on the average, a higher grade point average than the boys. Five times as many boys as girls are referred to psychiatric clinics. Four times as many boys as girls are referred to speech therapists for stuttering problems.

> . . . 4.8 per cent of today's secondary school students were tested as being illiterate.

3. Question: What do these statistics have to do with Beethoven, etc.

In the same Department of Health, Education and Welfare survey as mentioned before a young male, born and raised in the South, as a member of a large low-income family, having parents of limited education was the most likely candidate for illiteracy. As shown by statistics from a 1971 Harris Poll survey, and reaffirmed by the HEW survey, the South has a higher rate of functional illiteracy than any other region in the United States.

> Five times as many boys as girls are referred to psychiatric clinics.

4. Question: And what does all this have to do with knowing who your poor readers are?

In a recent National Education Association study, nine out of every ten students who have reading problems are boys.

More men than women go to jail (95 per cent of all inmates in jail in 1972 were male and 60 per cent of those men were under the age of 30). Men usually receive harsher jail sentences than women. Mostly, "dumb" people go to jail. Mostly "poor" people go to jail. People without jobs are highly likely to wind up in jail. Blacks make up 11 per cent of the population, but 42 per cent of the jail population. These statements come from a recent report of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration.

5. Question: So, who are your poor readers?

A recent study completed by the Virginia State Department of Education stated that although blacks account for 24 per cent of Virginia's school population, 41 per cent of all grade failures were blacks. Of all students who were suspended, 46 per cent were black. Of all students who were classified as educable or trainable mentally retarded, 50 per cent were black.

> . . . the South has a higher rate of functional illiteracy than any other region in the United States.

By now you should be able to answer all five questions:

1. All are males
2. More males than females are illiterate
3. Males are more often referred for remedial help than females.
4. Males living in the South are most likely to be candidiates for illiteracy.
5. Your poor readers are mostly likely to be the males in your class.

Solutions are not easy to find. But a teacher must diagnose before possible solutions can be found. Diagnosing your class to find out who the poor readers are will probably be fairly easy. Your poor readers will be:

A. Boys instead of girls.
B. Black boys more often than white boys.
C. Black girls more often than white girls.
D. Poor boys.
E. Poor boys who live in the South.

Other predictions:

A. You will refer more boys than girls to the school psychologist.
B. You will refer more boys than girls to the speech therapist.
C. You will give lower grades to the boys in your room than you will to the girls
D. You will have more discipline problems with your boys than with your girls.
E. You will fail more boys than girls.

> Nothing is more unequal than equal treatment of unequals.

In a recent study, boys in only two countries were found to be better readers than girls: Japan and Germany. The only significant factor seemed to be that in those two countries, there were more male teachers than female teachers in what we would call the elementary schools.

There is an old saying that "nothing is more unequal than equal treatment of unequals." Knowing that boys are **not** equal to girls in reading achievement, it is time for teachers, particularly female teachers, to begin unequal treatment for their male students.

Fortunately, Beethoven, Disney, etc. were able to overcome their teachers' negative comments. Will the boys in your class be as fortunate???

ASSIST YOUR CHILD IN READING

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and

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Parents who wish to become involved in the education of their children are frequently frustrated by not knowing what to do to help. The schools have in the not too distant past been very explicit in telling parents not to intervene in helping their children learn to read. Teachers on the other hand are aware of the necessity of adequate home support for children to succeed in school but are sometimes at a loss for suggesting means by which parents can be actively involved in assisting their children. The techniques of assisted reading suggest one way that parents can become actively involved in assisting their children in learning to read.

> Parents who wish to become involved . . . are frequently frustrated by not knowing what to do to help.

Assisting reading is based on the assumption that children process written language in a manner similar to the way they process or learn spoken language. The similarities exist in the manner in which parents read to their children. Children who are listening to stories that are being read to them and are following the lines of print are essentially processing spoken language. It seem reasonable that a child who follows the lines of print with his eyes while being read to is in effect having an experience very similar to those he had while he was learning to speak.

In learning to speak the child actually reconstructs the language of whatever speech community he is a member. He formulates the relationships with the words he learns and the objects, actions, and descriptions they represent. He also makes the connections between his internal, abstract, conceptual world and the outside world by means of the language he employs. The remarkable aspect of this

linguistic feat is that it occurs without any formal training. In learning to read the child applies his knowledge of the language to the printed words he experiences as he is reading in much the same way he applies it when listening and speaking.

Assisted reading is used differently with children who have different levels of reading ability.

Parents, therefore, can provide the reading environment for their children just as they provide the language and experiential environment for children when they are learning to talk.

Assisted reading is used differently with children who have different levels of reading ability. With the pre-school non-reader the parent must read to the child three to four times a week until the child has a love for stories and has developed a fairly long story-attention span. Those parents who begin reading to their children when they first begin to talk are setting the stage for success in reading. Generally children should have developed an adequate grammar of the language and a fairly extensive vocabulary before beginning assisted reading. This occurs between the ages of four and seven for most children. Since reading depends more on the information that one brings to the printed page than on the print one finds on the page, the more background a child has the greater are his chances for success when he begins to read.

One parent, who employed the assisted reading approach began by reading a picture book to his four-year-old son and then had the child read each word after him. At each reading session the procedure was repeated until the book was completed. Subsequent books were treated the same until the child had acquired a sight vocabulary sufficient to handle most beginning picture books. Once the child could transfer his knowledge of words by recognition on sight from book to book he would read and the parent supplied the words the child did not immediately recognize. This included new words he did not have in his sight vocabulary and words not readily recognized. In this manner the parent could anticipate the vocabulary load and the problems likely to be encountered in his son's reading. It was also observed that the boy generalized the beginning consonant sounds associated with those letters that have a regular one-to-one correspondence. He also began to use context as a means of verifying the words he selected from his vocabulary that might make sense in the story. After one year of assisted reading the child was reading on a high second grade level as measured by the Stanford Achievement Test, Prmary I Battery (SAT).

A variation of the word by word repetition approach to assisted reading for pre-school non-readers is to read a sentence at a time and have the child repeat the sentence immediately. The parent who used this approach reported that her five-year-old daughter would not repeat a line of print word by word but would repeat sentence by sentence. Individual learning styles or preferences must be respected when using assisted reading. The child should not be forced to do something that is not comfortable for him. It should also be stressed that the reading situation should be relaxed and fun for both parent and child. The child should not be pressured to read any longer than he wants to. This may mean that sessions on some occasions may only last one minute before the parent is asked to read without the child doing any reading. Do not force the child to read if he resists - - encourage but not force.

It should . . . be stressed that the reading situation should be relaxed and fun for both parent and child.

To test the effectiveness of the assisted reading approach more thoroughly the authors identified two second grade children who not only were very poor readers but also intensely disliked to read. Both children regularly refused to participate in their school reading classes. With the classroom teacher's cooperation, a two-phase assisted reading program was established to help these two children. First, while in the classroom, the children were given the opportunity, along with the rest of the class to listen to recorded stories over earphones and read along as they listened. Also students in the class took turns reading and listening to each other read. The second phase of the program dealt with involving the two children's parents.

We met with the parents and explained the assisted reading approach to them, stressing that they provide a pleasant atmosphere at home while the children read. Each child's mother read with her child from three to five times per week for about twenty minutes each time. The children did the majority of the reading with the mothers only supplying unknown words. We asked the parents to give frequent reinforcement for correct responses and for attempts to figure out words. We feel it is just as important for the children to find out what they are doing correctly as it is to hear about their errors. Both parents were asked to read with their children at a time when both wanted to read and not to criticize their children's mistakes

After four months of working with their children we were able to report that both children had raised their reading test scores from 9 to 5 months in the areas of word recognition and paragraph comprehension. In addition both children began to check books out of the school and public libraries and were found to read on their own voluntarily. When we first visited the homes both children refused to read to us and by the end of the four months, both children insisted upon reading at least one story. One child, in fact, refused to stop reading while we were talking to her mother.

We feel this approach, as this experience demonstrates, has real merit for parents in helping their children learn to read. It requires no special training or complicated equipment. In fact, by following the basic outline given below anyone should be able to assist a child without specific learning disabilities to become a good reader.

PROCEDURES FOR ASSISTED READING

PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

1. Read to your child three to four times a week to develop a love for stories and a wide background of experiences.
2. Provide as many educational experiences for your child as possible. Explore your home, neighborhood, city and then visit historical places, museums, art galleries, stores of all kinds, farms, public parks, the zoo, rivers, lakes; in short provide all kinds of experiences so that your child can bring this information to the stories he listens to or reads himself.
3. Begin to have your child repeat words or sentences to you. You may do this with only one page at first and gradually increase the number of pages that they repeat after you as you read to them. Do not insist that he repeat the whole book if he is not willing to do so. Remember it takes four or five years to learn to talk; learning to read is an equally long process.
4. By the end of the second or third month of assisted reading some children will be ready to do the major portion of

the reading with the parent supplying those words which are new to the child or for which he has trouble recognizing immediately. In the beginning it may take as many as one hundred repetitions of a word before the child may remember the word and read it each time he sees it. Don't be discouraged or get angry with him; reading is an extremely complicated act.

5. When the child is reading most of the words in simple books, the parent assists him by supplying the words he does not remember or that are new to him. The number of times a word will need to be supplied will depend on the meaning the word has for the child. Words such as what, that, they, these, those, when, where, etc. require many repetitions. These words still need to be supplied after a year or two of assisted reading. Don't be too precise in your corrections of the child's reading mistakes. There will be many times the child will make word substitutions that will have the same meaning as the words he misreads. Do not correct him when this happens if he has read the word correctly on previous occasions since he is reading for meaning, not precise word identification.
6. The child should be involved in selecting the books that are read to him and which he will read with parental assistance.

CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

1. If he is a beginning reader follow the procedures for preschool children.
2. Selection of books of interest to the child is very important. The child should be allowed to select the books he wants to read. The assumption is that he can read anything he can understand when it is read to him if he is assisted with the words he does not know.
3. The child reads the story and the parent supplies the words the child does not know. This keeps the flow of the story moving ahead and does not force the child to interrupt his train of thought and struggle with a word he cannot recognize immediately. When adults read, they read for meaning,not for word identification.The child's vocabulary will be increased and his ability to pronounce new words will also improve as a result of assisted reading.
4. Children have remarkable power with language. Assisted reading allows them to use this ability without the frustrations of the more formal methods used in schools. It also does not interfere with any method being employed by the schools since parents are encouraged to read to their children and assisted reading is merely an extension of this activity.

A basic ingredient in a successful assisted reading program is to create a good reading environment. At all times, you should be very positive during the reading sessions. Make this a special time for both you and your child. You might want to regularly schedule a "quiet time" when you both will get together. This should be in a place which is quiet and relatively free from distraction. At no time should you force the child to read; this only makes "having to read" a punishment and results in learning to dislike reading. Also remember not to read too often so as to do too much of a good thing. When you start your reading sessions you may want to have a special drink or candy available which your child normally only gets on special occasions - - make "reading time" a special occasion. Most important of all allow your child to make mistakes and be patient with him as reading is a very complex skill to learn. And when he finally recognizes that word, praise him. Give a lot of positive feedback to your child. Be constantly alert for things he does correctly. It is probably more important to tell your child what he has done correctly than to tell him what mistakes he has made. In general, to make a good reading environment, have a special time for reading and make this a time both of you and the rest of the family enjoy and look forward to. Encourage your child to use the library and encourage him anytime he reads.

It is possible for you to have a child who loves to read and reads well with only a minimum of effort on your part. Read together and enjoy each other's reading, it is quite a pay-off for only one and a half or two hours a week. Have fun with assisted reading!

RESULTS OF READING-TYPING INSTRUCTION

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Salem, Virginia 24153

A class combining reading and typing instruction was taught during the school year 1973-74 at Hidden Valley Intermediate School, Roanoke County, Virginia. The class was taught for a period of eighteen weeks and the students were twenty seventh graders who had experienced great difficulty in reading throughout their school year.

The purpose of including typing in the instruction was to improve eye-hand coordination, visual-memory and visual-perception. It was anticipated that if improvement could be made in these areas, errors in reversals, omissions, and perception would decrease.

Instruction was divided equally between the two subjects. The typing room was available for the class as well as the Multi-Media Reading Laboratory. The teacher was certified in both fields.

The purpose of including typing in reading instruction was to improve eye-hand coordination, visual-memory and visual-perception.

Typing was taught in the usual manner and at all times emphasis was placed on accuracy. Speed was never stressed and no standards had to be met in order to pass. A good deal of the time was spent in dictation from the teacher. Games were played in which fouls were called on the students who looked at their hands. Visual recall and concentration were desired during this activity. Placement of material on standard-size and odd-size paper was taught to help correct poor placement and spacing. Proofreading of all work was required, and the students had an opportunity to check other students' work as well as their own.

Reading instruction consisted of dictionary skills, vocabulary building, listening skills and comprehension improvement. Students worked in materials on the level of their ability.

The Gates-McGinitie test was administered at the beginning of the semester. The test consisted of three parts: Speed and Accuracy, Vocabulary, and Comprehension. In Speed and Accuracy, pupils were timed and were asked to mark as many correct meanings of the different words given as possible. The number of words attempted was scored under Speed; the number of words which were correct was scored under Accuracy. The Vocabulary section consisted of words common to this age group. The first words were easy and increased in difficulty as the pupils progressed. The Comprehension section of the tests consisted of short paragraphs to be read silently and questions to be answered about each.

Another form of the test was administered at the end of the semester to determine the progress made by each student. The teacher held a conference with each pupil and discussed total scores of the beginning and final tests. No grade levels were discussed.

The results of the twenty participants were as follows:

	Speed	Accuracy	Vocabulary	Comprehension
IMPROVED	19	15	14	11
REMAINED THE SAME	0	3	1	3
REGRESSED	1	2	5	6

The most significant result of the tests was the fact that all but one pupil improved in speed. Of these nineteen, fifteen improved in accuracy. Many of these pupils improved several grade levels in both areas.

Fourteen improved in Vocabulary as follows:

3 improved $^1/_2$ grade level
3 improved 1 grade level
2 improved $1^1/_2$ grade levels
4 improved 2 grade levels
1 improved $2^1/_2$ grade levels
1 improved 3 grade levels

Eleven improved in Comprehension as follows:

3 improved 1 grade level
2 improved $1^1/_2$ grade levels
4 improved 2 grade levels
1 improved $2^1/_2$ grade levels
1 improved 3 grade levels

Another result was the intense interest by the students in typing as a class. Many of the students chose typing as an elective in the eighth grade. Since these pupils are often unable to keep up with the pace of a regular typing class, this experience gave them a feeling of security and accomplishment.

A book tight shut is but a block of paper.

Chinese Proverb

INDIVIDUALIZATION THROUGH LANGUAGE ARTS CONTRACTS

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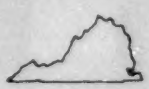
Walking into an upper elementary grade classroom in Falls Church the observer immediately notes a startling diversity of activities taking place. A child gets up, picks a spelling exercise, completes it and brings it to his partner to check. Several children are found in rather unlikely positions engrossed in trade books, others are busy in reading labs, yet others are involved in skill exercises. There is a hum of activity in the room, a child looks perplexed and is assisted by the teacher, elsewhere a child answers another's question.

To counter the boredom and resistance of upper elementary level students to a strictly basal reading and workbook instructional approach, many of our fifth and sixth graders are on individual language arts contracts. The contracts are for a specified time period of usually one or two weeks. They generally include independent reading, work in skill areas needing practice, spelling, creative writing and any individual or group projects currently in progress. The language arts contract does not specify daily assignments. Therefore, children are encouraged to make responsible decisions. They learn to budget time and to select activities for themselves. Motivation stays high since children know they have many options to choose from and unlike more traditional group approaches they are clearly responsible for themselves.

Children are encouraged to make responsible decisions.

Parents are consulted prior to initiation of the contractual arrangement so that questions and concerns can be effectively dealt with and cooperation solicited. Parents are also periodically advised of their child's progress. Student-teacher conferences are held at the culmination of the weekly or bi-weekly time period and both teacher and children participate in evaluating achievement towards specific goals.

The benefits of the contractual language arts program are evident throughout Falls Church City Schools. Children grow in independence and responsibility as well as in specific skills. The teachers, freed from working with several reading groups each day, can work more effectively with individual children as needed. Of course, this is but one of a multitude of instructional approaches that can be successful, but we in Falls Church are very pleased that it has worked so well for us.



EXPANDING THE READING WORLD THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE EFFORTS

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Community and junior colleges are uniquely qualified to promote a major national thrust toward the goal of increasing the reading skills, abilities, interests and tastes of students. These institutions foster renewed efforts to assure that problems uncovered as they study student needs are solved and that suggestions for implementing adequate programs are initiated immediately. New projects are based on the belief that the community and junior colleges will have a great impact on meeting the reading needs of the citizens of America. The students come from all segments of the population and environment.

The community and junior colleges have the potential for playing significant roles not only in identifying and correcting reading needs of citizens of the country, but in extending the reading tastes and interests of the people. The reading centers in the colleges of the nation today also have tremendous opportunities for extending expertise to other countries since a great influx of foreign students are enrolling in community colleges, seeking help immediately in reading skills, grammar, and language usage. Many foreign students disseminate these skills to families, friends and natives of their own countries. They carry back with them the great enthusiasm they have captured from learning in the community colleges' open-door approach to reading. There are gratifying changes in these students who travel back and forth between this nation and their own. They return from their travel to express appreciation for the help they have received in developing the reading skills necessary for success in their daily activities and to seek further help in transmitting these skills to their fellow citizens.

Many foreign students disseminate these skills to families, friends, and natives of their own countries.

Community colleges offer a new frontier for reading improvement in the business world. Businessmen use the resources and technical assistance of the reading facilities at the community college for sharpening reading skills needed in their work. Employees of banks, real estate and insurance firms, government agencies, department store staffs and supervisory and managerial workers from hotels, restaurants, chemical plants, factories, and other industries in the metropolitan area find time to seek the aid of professionally prepared instructors.

Engineering students use the college reading-learning center for increasing speed and accuracy, refining critical reading abilities, grasping significant facts, vocabulary development and other communication skills. Professors eminently qualified in the field of reading instruction and related professions prepare learning packages that teach reading skills in the various content areas, vocations and professions. Materials are assembled pertaining to various fields of technology so that students have the opportunity to read the kinds of materials they will encounter on the job. This additional practice in job-type reading and vocabulary acquisition makes for more successful employees when they enter the job market.

The reading-learning center at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College occupies a unique position in innovative education in that it emphasizes learning rather than teaching. All efforts and attention are directed toward what is happening to the learner. Teaching plays an important role, however, in the learning process since a wise selection of materials, software, methods and techniques and careful guidance are necessary to meet the needs of students at the right moment for learning.

Businessmen use the resources and technical assistance of the reading facilities at the community college . . .

The interdisciplinary approach is the major stress in this reading-learning facility. This approach cuts across all subject lines. No one discipline receives greater attention than another. Insight into each subject area is explored carefully in consultation with teachers and leaders from each of the various disciplines. The learning packages and programs are developed or selected by the teachers, counselors, and coordinators whose students use them.

Reading skills, abilities, attitudes and understandings play an important role in every subject area. College teachers are alert to the fact that certain reading skills must be mastered by students to assure success in a particular subject. Through the joint efforts of teachers, scholars, technicians, and learning center personnel, these skills can be successfully explored, utilized and mastered to produce more effective and efficient mastery of subject matter.

Multi-media materials, equipment and software make learning to read an intriguing experience for students. Various audio-visual techniques motivate and challenge the student to delve more deeply into his learning activities and to strive for improvement. Making reading more closely related to English usage and composition skills of students by combining the efforts of composition and reading instructors constitutes a major thrust in the J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College reading program. This proves most effective and promotes efficiency in student work. As students learn to read and analyze paragraphs, they begin to write and arrange them in a sequenced unit to develop themes, essays, and other compositions. Consequently their analytical and comprehension skills in reading improve extensively. Styles of writing begin to shape up. Students who are weak in vocabulary engage in word study activities with instructors and tutors. This type of meaningful association with new words fosters vocabulary mastery for the students.

Reading is an all-encompassing field with skills that can make a man master of his own mind. Through reading he is better able to use his mind to make decisions in the areas of his endeavors.

The philosophy of the community college provides the means for responding to changing societal needs in the locale of a region: the cities, rural areas and suburbia. Colleges must constantly formulate new projections by establishing

reading centers throughout the nation to insure expansion of their capabilities as local agencies for effecting changes in the reading habits and abilities of our citizens. This requires restructuring existing curricula to promote effective instruction and learning through improved reading skills and habits. A nation of reading citizens in a reading environment is a goal the colleges must seek.

MADISON COLLEGE RIGHT-TO-READ PRESERVICE READING EDUCATION PROGRAM

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(Editor's Note: Dr. Merlin is a member of the VSRA Board of Directors.)

Madison College has received a national Right-To-Read grant for the 1974-75 school year to develop a model teacher training program in reading for elementary teachers. The Right-To-Read Preservice Reading Education Program has as its primary purpose the development of a comprehensive-coordinated program in reading and related areas of language arts and library science. A competency based modular approach to teacher training will be featured in the program.

Project Plans include:

1. Cooperative Planning

   Three planning committees are organized to assist in the planning and evaluation of the program as it evolves.

   A. Reading Education Advisory Team: This committee is responsible for reviewing and selecting the important competencies needed by the classroom teachers for teaching reading and related areas in the elementary school. The review of reading modules, teacher education materials, evaluation procedures and other plans devised for the project is another function of this committee. Madison faculty, students and reading specialists from Rockingham County are represented on the planning team.

   B. Field Based Advisory Team: This group includes reading specialists and administrators from four Right-To-Reading elementary schools in Rockingham County along with the Madison College reading faculty. This committee reviews and assists in scheduling and planning field based activities which are required in all the reading modules.

   C. Inservice Advisory Teams: One inservice team is organized in each Right-To-Read school to plan and develop a series of inservice meetings for its school. The meetings are planned in accordance with the needs and interests of each school's staff. Included on each school's team are the reading specialist, principal, classroom teachers and a Madison faculty member in reading.

2. Development of Modules and Materials

   A series of competency based reading modules will be developed for the first elementary developmental reading course. These modules will be coordinated with modules which have been in use for the second reading course in diagnostic reading. Through the modular format students will have an opportunity to select various types of learning activities and evaluation of their competencies. Evaluation of students will include assessment of knowledge, skills and attitudes. A variety of audio-visual, programmed and other print materials will be reviewed by the project staff for possible utilization in the reading modules. Through the grant, materials will be purchased or developed by the project staff.

3. Inservice Program

   A series of thirty-two or more inservice meetings are scheduled for the 1974-75 year. Each school will be involved in a total of eight meetings, four inservice meetings and four planning / evaluation meetings. The purpose of the inservice program is to acquaint the school's staff with the project and to introduce reading techniques and materials of interest to the teachers.

4. Evaluation and Research

   All areas of the program will be evaluated. A pre-test and post-test will be utilized in the developmental reading course and the inservice program. Research plans call for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the competency based approach compared to the traditional methods of teacher training. Students will be evaluated for research purposes upon entry into teaching and several years after finishing the program.

For further information, write to the project director.

One Committee is responsible for reviewing and selecting the important competencies needed by classroom teachers for teaching reading and related areas in the elementary school.

TEACHING PRE-READING SKILLS IN KINDERGARTEN

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and
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It is not the purpose of this article to debate the pros and cons of formally teaching beginning reading at a uniform early age. A review of the literature on this subject will undoubtly bring to one's attention such studies as those conducted by McKee[4], Ching[1], Sutton[8], Durkin[2], and to bring it within the borders of our own state, Scherwitsky[7].

Instead the author will concentrate on a suggested model for teaching pre-reading skills as carried out in the kindergarten at the John P. Wynne Campus School of Longwood College.

First however I wish to identify three points that the reader should keep in mind while reading the remainder of this article:

1. **Pre-reading activities are important especially when prescriptive in nature.**

Most reading authorities agree that a child will be more likely to succeed and profit with beginning reading instruction if he has experienced a variety of pre-reading activities. Such activities should foster self-confidence and independence as well as further develop visual and auditory skills. Not every kindergartener needs to be involved in all pre-reading activities as provided by most of the major readiness programs. Paradis indicated this in his study when he stated the following:

> "Most kindergarten children from middle socio-economic areas possess the skills necessary to perform typical visual discrimination exercises prior to formal training. For these children there is little to be gained in terms of visual discrimination skills by working additional exercises contained in readiness materials."[6]

Thus pre-testing and prescriptive instruction are vital.

2. **The teaching of such skills and earlier starts in reading have no value if we fail to alter what is taught in those years that follow kindergarten.**

Subsequent instruction must reflect this earlier involvement. The first grade teacher in Virginia's public schools can no longer continue to teach reading the way she did for years prior to the advent of public kindergartens. We must build upon what has been learned in kindergarten; not repeat it.

3. **We must do more than give lip service to individualizing instruction.**

On a national level Durkin[3] still views the need for individualized instruction as remaining unfulfilled in the 1970's and cites two possible causes. Scherwitzky's survey of Virginia's kindergarten teachers implies that we are moving in the direction of individualizing in kindergarten. A majority of the 354 kindergarten teachers who replied to the survey expressed a need to individualize reading instruction on this level.[7]

The pre-reading skills program used at the Wynne Campus School reflects all three of the above considerations. It was developed at the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning at the University of Wisconsin. The project director was Dr. Richard Venezky. This PRS program has been produced commercially by the Encyclopaedia Britannica Educational Corporation.

The program meets our needs in that it is an individualized approach that prepares children to be ready to learn to read when they begin formal instruction in an ungraded program; involves individually administered pre-testing for specific pre-reading skills, incorporates a variety of disciplines including art and music, involves parents via communications home which include instructional games, utilizes learning centers, and offers a means of evaluation as well as a prompt and efficient method of record keeping. In addition, the PRS program supports the Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development designed by Dr. Wayne Otto and used by the remainder of the school as a part of the total reading program.

The program concentrates on the following five specific pre-reading skills that are listed in the two areas below:

A. Visual skills
   1. letter order
   2. letter orientation
   3. word detail

B. Sound skills
   1. matching
   2. blending

Program components of PRS include:

1. Skills tests: diagnostic to help identify individual needs.

2. Schedules and teacher's files. Both sound and visual schedules are suggested with each activity in the schedule keyed to the teacher's file. The file card for each activity gives the purpose, materials, a detailed lesson plan, and a criterion for evaluation.

3. Instructional activities: small group and individual games to teach each skill including take - home games which the children make in school and keep. There are many materials used in this approach which the children take home. Such materials create parental interest because they offer tangible evidence of what the child is doing in school. As the parent of a kindergartener involved in the program I have observed the genuine excitement expressed by my five-year-old when she brings home one of these games which she made in school and now explains to

Not every kindergartener needs to be involved in all pre-reading activities as provided by most of the major readiness programs.

her parents.

4. Management system: the typical McBee pupil profile card which can be notched and skewed. This promotes individualization of instruction and enables the teacher to keep tract daily of which skills and activities are needed.

Conclusion

PRS alone cannot solve all reading programs. We will never find any one approach or program that will. it does however prepare children for learning to read by showing what reading is about and by providing them with the necessary pre-reading skills. PRS views reading as not a single skill but rather a composite of separable skills. Five years of research as well as large and small scale field testing isolated those skills necessary for beginning reading from those having little or no relationship to reading success.

Observers of the program in action are always welcomed.

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THE FIRST AIM

In all reading instruction, the first aim should be to produce children and adults who want to read and who do read; the second aim should be to help them to read effectively. If the second aim is given priority, it is probable that the first aim will never be achieved.

Carl Anderson in **Educational Courier and reported in The Education Digest**, December, 1974

TUTORING PROGRAM USES STUDENT TEAMING

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"Inservice? Terrific! . . . as long as it is applicable, practical and relevant to my situation!"

This has certainly been the reaction of numerous teachers to the question of teacher training within a school system. With the pressures that are on today's teachers in almost every area, it is understandable that they might be somewhat jealous of their time and energies. Yet, most are more than willing to become involved in an experience which leads to a more exciting classroom.

Recently, eighteen teachers at Green Acres Elementary School committed themselves to implementing a tutoring program based on a course entitled Programed Tutoring in Reading (PTR) sponsored by LaVerne College in California. Using student teaming for individual reinforcement was not new to Green Acres, but the structure provided in PTR made it possible for expansion. The staff was definitely interested in the possibilities.

> As the children gained insight as to what was expected of them as tutors, they became anxious to begin working with their younger counterparts.

The organization of teachers, pupils, and materials was the most difficult aspect of the program. Once the structure was established, the children's enthusiasm and proficiency made the actual tutoring process a fairly simple operation.

Teachers were grouped into two clusters and paired into teams each consisting of one upper and one lower grade teacher. These teams then worked closely in scheduling, testing, making the necessary components of the program, and choosing appropriate reading materials. Cassettes and filmstrips were used to acquaint the teachers with PTR at the cluster meetings.

A pretest and posttest were included in the program as a

means of pairing students and evaluating their progress. However, teacher judgment and other evaluative tools were also considered when pairing.

To introduce the idea to the students, the upper grade teachers used the same tapes and cassettes and paired the pupils to work as tutors and tutees within their own classrooms. Because PTR offers a great amount of structure it was necessary to spend several days in this "intraclass tutoring" arrangement before advancing to the "interclass tutoring" which involved the younger students. As the children gained insight as to what was expected of them as tutors, they became anxious to begin working with their younger counterparts.

> With ninety percent student involvement, there is no question that it is applicable!

PTR consists of three main phases: word review, reading, and word study. The program is basically aimed at increasing the student's sight vocabulary as well as his knowledge of word meanings. However, the tutors have intuitively augmented the basics by using their own creative techniques of teaching.

PTR does not replace the instructional reading program at Green Acres, where children learn to read at least one and one-half hours of each school day. It has proven to be an important supplement. Programed Tutoring in Reading is one example of an inservice program which has proven to be relevant and practical. With ninety per cent student involvement, there is no question that it is applicable!

Because the project includes students on all levels, the communication between upper and lower grade teachers has definitely increased. The staff are working together in teams to reach a common goal, and there seems to be a willingness on the part of teachers and students to make it a successful experience. The children have accepted the responsibility either as tutors or tutees and have learned to give and take constructive criticism as well as commendations. Because of their positive response, teachers have begun to consider the possibilities of adapting a similar structure to other academic areas.

ROLE OF READING TEACHER IN READING SERVICES PROGRAM

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Not all the services enumerated below can be accomplished by a single reading teacher. Priorities should be established according to the needs of each school.

1. **A reading teacher:**

   a. Is a member of the faculty
   b. Works directly or indirectly with pupils who may benefit from additional instruction in reading
   c. Works with administrators, teachers, other professionals, and parents to improve and coordinate the total reading program of the school

2. **A reading teacher may serve a school by:**

   a. Acting in an advisory capacity with the administration and instructional staff concerning the reading program through:
      (1) Conferring with individual classroom teachers, groups of teachers (teams, grade level, etc.), other specialists (speech, hearing, psychologist, etc.), administrators, parents and students
      (2) Working directly with teachers in a classroom setting
      (3) Arranging and / or conducting inservice workshops for improving developmental and corrective aspects of the program including the use of diagnostic teaching procedures
      (4) Surveying, evaluating, recommending, ordering and demonstrating appropriate materials and techniques for teaching reading
      (5) Interpreting test data to teachers, administrative staff, students, and parents
      (6) Assisting the teachers and or administrative staff to plan presentations concerning the reading program to the community
      (7) Guiding parent volunteers working with the reading program
   b. Identifying, diagnosing, prescribing, and teaching children with observed or potential reading problems through:
      (1) Testing and reporting results to appropriate personnel
      (2) Observing children in the classroom suggesting instructional materials and techniques
      (3) Teaching individuals or small groups, when appropriate, in a clinical situation
      (4) Teaching a particular reading skill to small groups in classrooms in cooperation with classroom teachers and / or teams
      (5) Teaching demonstration lessons
      (6) Recommending certain referrals to pupil services through appropriate channels
   c. Keeping records of:
      (1) Testing
      (2) Planning and executing effective progress reporting
      (3) Parent and team conferences

The role of the reading teacher does not include evaluating staff, substituting for a classroom teacher, or being a teacher's aide.

Sister Emily Ann Appleton
Director of Pupil Personnel

and

Sister Elaine McCarron
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(Editor's Note: Sister Elaine wrote an article for last year's **Reading in Virginia**. Her second contribution is most welcomed. She is also a member of the VSRA Board of Directors.)

Early each January, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Richmond give the California Test of Basic Skills, grades three through eight. The test offers valuable assistance to students, parents, teachers, schools, and the school system as one means of assessing reading ability as well as other curriculum areas.

Reporting forms are available, giving information on national, school system, and individual student performance. There is also a parent report form giving the parent a standard tool in addition to skill sheets, report cards, and subjective teacher observation for studying the reading progress of their children.

Teachers meet with parents and students in an effort to discuss individual needs of students. Test data help teachers deal in terms of needs with each child and the total class.

The school obtains new insights into the specific needs within the school, the outgrowth being identification of, for example, materials, additional staff, and schedule adjustments that could improve the reading program.

..Instead of testing being a weapon to batter children, or frighten teachers, we find our testing program an aid in helping assess where we are and how to improve. Realizing the pitfalls of a halo effect and avoiding total dependence on testing to give all knowledge about a student or school, we believe that a school system can look to testing for some insights about its reading progress.

Available from this test are scores for reading vocabulary, reading comprehension, and total reading. On the charts following are the total reading scores representing fifty-six (56) schools in the Diocese of Richmond for the past three years. "————" represents national norms. "-o-o-oAASS" represents anticipated achievement standard scores obtained through academic aptitude tests. "- - -ESS" represents expanded standard scores or actual achievement.
(See the next three pages for these charts.)

EVALUATION AS SUPPORT TO DEVELOPMENTAL READING PROGRAM

THE FLY CATCHER

Have you ever in your life
Seen a fly catcher with his wife,
Sitting on a lily pad round,
Trying to make not even a sound?

Here it comes in a great big hurry
The big, black fly - - - Oh, how nervy!
Flying here and flying there
Having a good time without a care.

Zipping by froggie without even looking,
Didn't see frog with his tongue for the hooking
Long and sticky it reaches out high,
Mr. Frog's tongue caught that big, black fly!

Drawing a child's imagination out into the world around him can make reading much more exciting. Bring a science or a history lesson alive with a little action. Children can read about the facts, turn it into a poem and act it out. Reading can be a lot of fun!

Miss Carol Myers
Elementary Physical Education Teacher
Fox and Southampton Schools
Richmond Public Schools
Richmond, Virginia

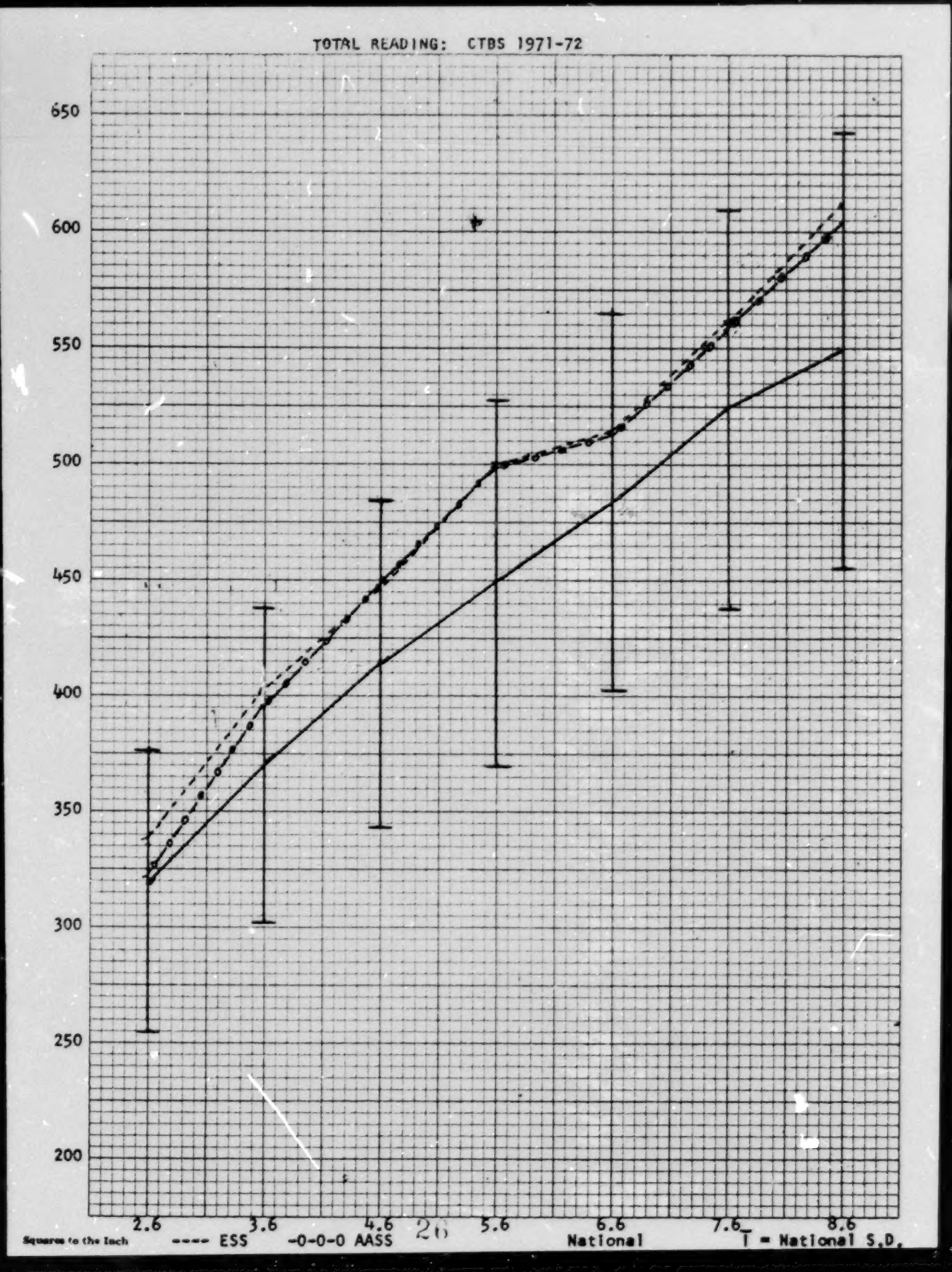
RESEARCH TELLS US??

Little is known about how to encourage the reading abilities of the intermediate student, stated Jeanne Chall, director of the Harvard Graduate School of Education Reading Laboratory. Teachers who do a good job seem to do so instinctively, and cannot say why they are effective. That's one subject that needs to be investigated. Some intelligent students from inner-city areas who manage to get into college test out at the seventh-grade level in reading instead of at the college freshman level, and their needs are another subject of reading research. Finally, practically nothing is known about how to teach the adult to read, another research area which needs intensive study.

Jeanne Chall
Right-To-Read Conference
(Reported by Capitol Publications and
Phi Delta Kappan, March, 1974.)

IN 1873

..."In general, reading has not been successfully taught in our primary schools. Good readers are the exceptions."
NEA Proceedings, 1873


TOTAL READING: CTBS 1971-72
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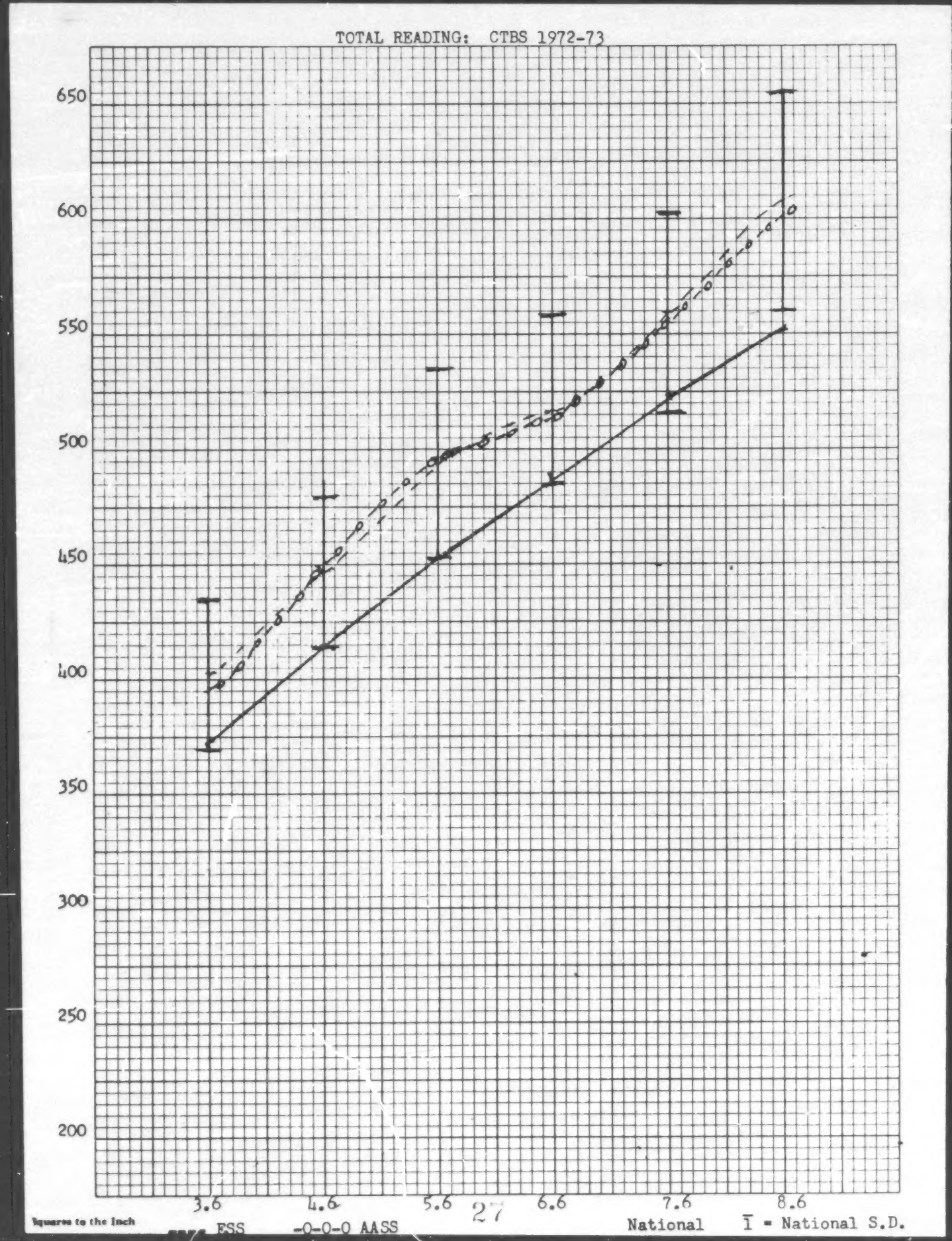
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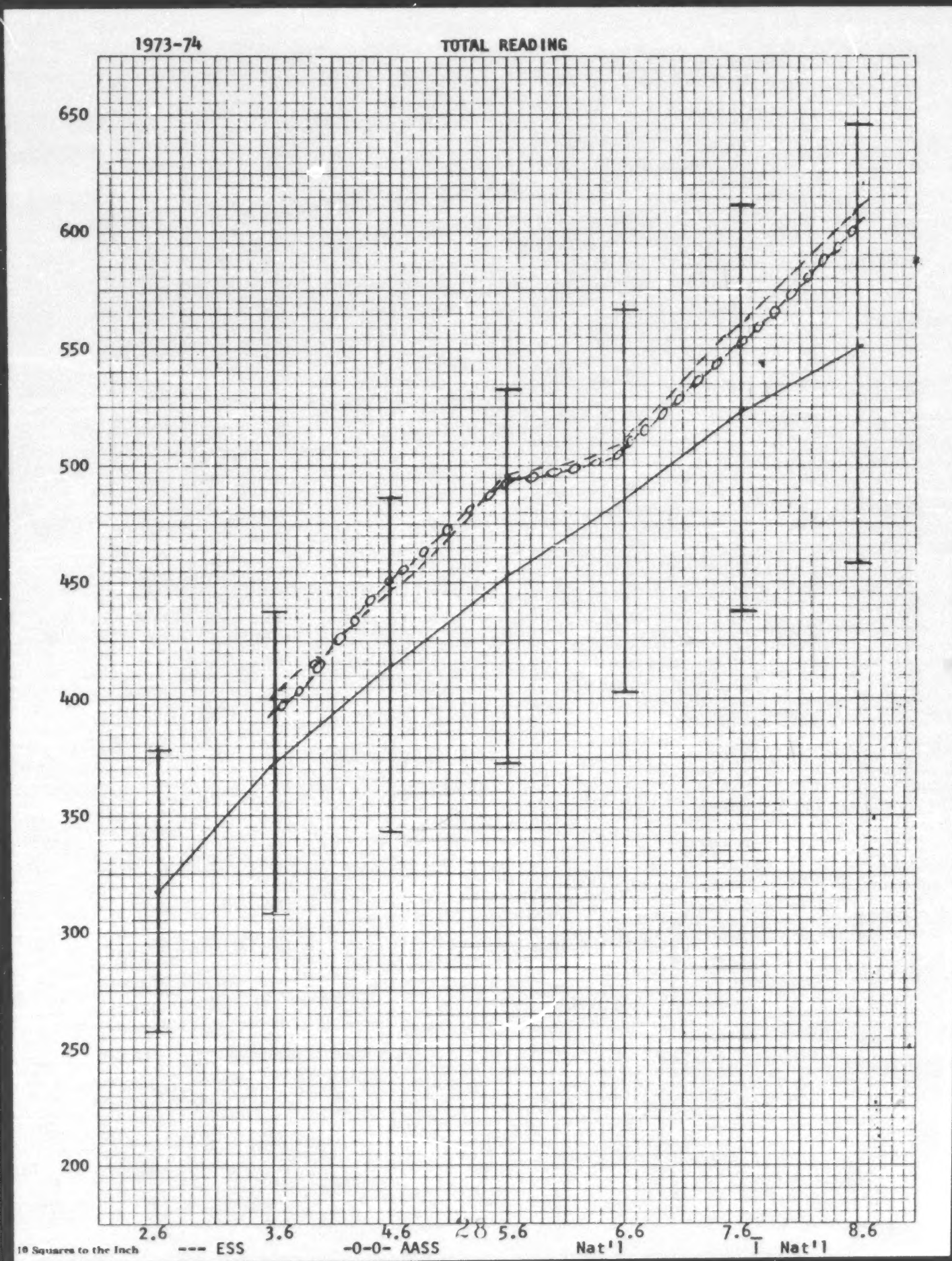
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THE RURAL HIGH SCHOOL -- AN APPROACH TO CONTENT READING PROBLEMS

Mrs. Patti Kahsar
Reading Specialist
Goochland County High School
Goochland, Virginia 23063

Reading inservice programs can be successful in rural high schools when time has been taken to prepare the success. The initial step in this preparation must be the observation of strengths and weaknesses of faculty and students. Keeping in mind the factors which make a school unique will help insure that inservice hits its mark.

Goochland High School has a student body of 530 students and standardized reading scores well below the state median. It is the second year of an ESAA Basic Project. Initial skepticism existed concerning how students who reached high school unprepared to read their textbooks could be helped. If there was a way, teachers generally believed that the magic would be performed anywhere but in the classroom. That was where the finished product was to be tested. The general approach in dealing with school-wide reading problems had become avoidance of reading activities. An extremely high percentage of information was being dispersed through the lecture with little activity-type reinforcement. Textbooks were purchased and rarely used. In terms of reading, students were accepted where they were and left there. Teachers' concern over content led them to cover that content even if it meant making students completely dependent on them for information. Students wanted to improve their reading skills but wanted quick, tangible results, preferably in terms of improved grades.

Inservice was an answer, provided that faculty interest could be caught and held.

If the ESAA program were to reach as many students as needed help, it became clear that changes in classroom instruction would have to be affected. Inservice was an answer, provided that faculty interest could be caught and held. First, a state mini-course grant was obtained to conduct a full staff inservice program in content reading skills. Isolating and eliminating elements which often cause inservice disaster came next. Rural school faculty members often commute long distances. In scheduling the mini-course, every possible consideration was given to making the course too accessible to be refused. Sixteen hours of instruction were required for one credit hour. The cooperation and advice of the principal was sought out from the planning stages through the last session of the course. He made it possible to utilize two full inservice days (previously used as work days and for departmental meetings). Three monthly faculty meetings were also relinquished to provide shorter follow-up sessions. Using these times meant that each faculty member would be exposed to new ideas and would be present for the sessions whether or not that person desired to complete the course for credit. No extra time was required of teachers who were already spending hours each day in commuting.

While searching for a high school reading consultant can be discouraging, it is important to be selective. An outline of specific activities and skills to be included in the course was prepared before contacting any potential consultants. Although many "prepackaged" inservice programs include valuable elements, it seemed logical that a faculty would respond more enthusiastically to a program tailored to their needs. Wasting time which teachers had come to expect to be available for personal planning would have killed any faculty support for inservice. It was not imperative that our outline be accepted in total by the consultant, but it did point out the direction in which we wished to move and specific weaknesses to which he would need to address himself. The consultant knew our expectations and was able to point to those which he could meet. This seemed a more sensible procedure in selecting a consultant than trusting that a strong recommendation would insure a program fitting the needs of any staff.

The sessions themselves were planned to include work time. Considering that teachers teach as they are taught, lecture situations were used only when necessary. Teachers were asked to bring student textbooks with them to each session and to select an upcoming unit from which to work. It was suggested that units be selected which had caused the most difficulty in previous years. Word recognition exercises, vocabulary extension exercises, three level guides, and concept guides were developed then tried in classrooms. Readability formulas were used to evaluate textbooks in use. After cloze tests were developed, they were administered and results were plotted. A directed reading activity was demonstrated using staff members. All items were incorporated into a thematic unit by teachers who wished to receive credit for the course. Time to complete much of this work was provided with the consultant and the reading teacher present to allow specific questions to be answered. Sessions were held in the library where available instructional materials could be reviewed and rediscovered in terms of the thematic unit. Time was provided to discuss successes, problems, and observations.

The consultant knew our expectations and was able to point to those which he could meet.

While such sessions may seem possible with a highly cooperative staff, it should be noted that cooperative staffs are often made in one-to-one encounters, lunch table discussions, and work groups before and after hours. Limitations of time or personality may mean that the reading teacher is not always the right person to help every teacher. Seeking out willing and available staff members to act as leaders may include several benefits. Reassurance from a peer may encourage a teacher to attempt an activity he had considered unworkable in his classes. Departmental groups can share specific solutions to specific problems. Pairing or grouping across content area lines often opens new approaches to similar problems. Special personnel serving as leaders gain insight into classroom problems which may make them more effective in their jobs. The principal, librarian, math resource teacher, and a guidance counselor served as dispensers of moral support. Each expressed personal gain, and each encouraged at least one other person to complete the course for credit. The reading teacher attempted to give specific, concrete help. Sample activities were prepared with teachers. Two techniques used in providing this service were being extremely accessible

and sometimes doing more than is comfortable for a teacher to accept without responding by giving it a try.

Evaluation from participants emphasized the value in terms of improved staff communications. Over half of the staff completed the course for credit. Approximately eighty-five percent of the total staff tried techniques or developed materials to use in their classrooms. Personal observation seems to indicate that major changes in classroom philosophy have occurred in perhaps twenty per cent of the staff. If our target has not been hit on the mark, it is because we still have work to do in understanding and providing for unique factors of our school - - not because the situation is a small, rural high school.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE 70's:

PROGRAMMING FOR SUCCESS IN BEGINNING READING

Dr. Betty H. Yarborough
Professor of Elementary Education
Program Leader, Office of Human Development
Old Dominion University
School of Education
Norfolk, Virginia 23508

(Editor's Note: Dr. Yarborough was the first president of the Virginia State Reading Association.)

The one goal of every entering school child, above all others, is to learn to read. Early excitement and enthusiasm are quickly dimmed, however, if first attempts to learn to read are disappointing. Failure in beginning reading experiences can have such far-reaching effects, both affectively and academically, that the child's entire school future is threatened.

The most frequent cause of unsuccessful beginning reading experiences is lack of readiness. When initial reading instruction is offered to a child who has not developed adequate pre-reading skills, natural, continuous progress in the reading curriculum is impossible. As one painful frustration leads to another, a syndrome of failure can ensue from which the child may never completely recover.

In recent years educators have become increasingly aware of the importance of designing developmental reading programs that are **truly developmental** in terms of the varying rates at which children learn. Most elementary schools are attempting to individualize reading instruction through both administrative and instructional adaptations of the school curriculum. Such adaptations, however, have not been made as frequently at the readiness level as at other levels in the reading curriculum - - although the need for them appears to be greatest in the child's first school years.

> The most frequent cause of unsuccessful beginning reading experiences is lack of readiness.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" may be interpreted by reading educators to mean that "studying children upon school entry and ministering to their needs is considerably more productive than later offering tedious remediation to children who are reading failures." An early failure tends to foretell continuing failure, a good start in reading tends to lead a child to continued success. Recent research has provided understandings about learning and teaching which, if applied to pre-reading activities, promise to insure "good starts" for most children.

Since learning to read is every child's right, productive readiness programs are a mandate for primary educators of the 70's. The following guidelines are suggested for educators wishing to develop such readiness programs:

1. Children enter kindergarten and first grade with varying degrees of readiness for reading and differ in readiness competencies, not only among themselves but also on an intra-individual basis. Therefore, careful screening of each child upon school entry is essential. To accomplish effective screening various instruments and techniques should be used. General measures of cognitive ability are needed as well as a battery of diagnostic tools to determine each child's level of development in each of several specific skills, including visual and auditory perception and memory as well as general language development.

2. Objective-based readiness programs hold as much, if not more, promise at the readiness level as objective-based programs at any other level. The goals of instruction for each child should be explicitly clear. When goals are clear, mastery can be sought. When each skill is mastered before another is undertaken, the child grows in confidence and in motivation to learn. At the readiness level, haste does truly make waste.

3. Ideally a child should be provided reading instruction on the basis of his presenting strengths. Accordingly, a school should have available three or four basal reading programs, each emphasizing visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or language-based procedures. If however, there is only one basal program, it should be multi-sensory so that a child with any severe limitation will not be doomed to failure.

> Since learning to read is every child's right..

4. When the child's needs have been determined, an appropriate readiness program should be prescribed individually for him, and he should remain in readiness instruction until mastery of deficient skills is attained. There are some "marginally ready" children who may enter reading with one or more minor deficiencies. Such deficiencies may become the source of serious problems if they are not corrected, however. The teacher should therefore remain alert to any pre-reading inadequacies after a child enters reading and continue to work toward their correction.

5. Some children may go directly into reading at an early

"Reading in Virginia, March, 1975"

age while others may need several months or even semesters of pre-reading training, but the readiness period is not a waiting period. Growth can and should be accelerated by carefully applied instruction.

6. The readiness program is not a "thing apart," an entity unto itself. It is a viable component of the reading curriculum. Failure to recognize the relationship of the readiness program to initial reading instruction and therefore failure to correlate it with subsequent instruction may render the readiness program unsuccessful, regardless of the apparent worthwhileness of its individual components.

Certain reading programs have specific requirements for success in initial reading experiences (such as color knowledge, or the ability to write, etc.) Although such components may not be fundamental to learning to read, they are essential to learning to read in given basals. The readiness program should take into account not only the traditional pre-reading curriculum but also the requirements of any specific basal program which pupils are expected to enter.

7. The readiness program should be internally consistent and well organized. Many materials may be used, but they should be selected to complement one another and, more importantly, to match the stated goals of the readiness program.

Most young children profit from the security of structure. At the readiness level it is likely that they will profit more from simple, well-defined programs than from more general programs where goals are nebulous and instruction is characterized by random happenings that do not form a "total package." Easily distracted children in particular need fewer stimuli than are often found in lower-level classrooms. To the extent possible, children should understand the objectives toward which they are working.

A readiness program may be at once both carefully planned and pleasurable. A structured program does not require the teacher to abandon happy hours with children.

Readiness for writing and readiness for reading should not be confused.

8. Monitoring of the readiness program should be accomplished by on-going evaluation of pupil progress and careful record keeping.

9. Grouping and regrouping of pupils is usually necessary since children differ so widely in both skills needs and rates of growth. Pupils requiring intensive instruction should be taught in very small groups and / or on a one-to-one basis. Other children, even at the age of five or six, may be capable of many self-directed activities. The teacher should therefore carefully evaluate and re-evaluate each child's growth as an independent learner as well as his growth in skills development before making decisions as to the group or groups to which he will be assigned.

10. Certain social skills are needed for success in reading, including ability to attend to tasks at hand, ability to wait one's turn, ability to work in group situations, and the like. Care should be taken that children lacking desired social skills are not misidentified as lacking academic skills.

Often children regarded as not ready for reading are, in fact, as ready for reading instruction as for instruction of any other type. Lack of needed social skills, however, causes them to be unable to take tests well or to otherwise participate in routine activities. Such children should be identified and assisted accordingly. Of course, at all times all pupils should be able to understand and follow all directions given them.

11. Readiness for writing and readiness for reading should not be confused. Writing involves certain motor skills (use of the hand) not necessary for success in reading. Unless a reading program requires writing for its execution, the teacher should not use samples of a child's writing or drawings to estimate readiness for reading. Most children acquire pre-reading competencies before they acquire pre-writing competencies. Children lacking pre-writing skills should not be delayed in their development of reading skills.

A structured program does not require the teacher to abandon happy hours with children.

12. Oral fluency appears to have little to do with developing efficient reading skills. Certain shy children or children who find it difficult to verbalize well may be regarded as not ready for reading when they are.

13. Listening tests are recommended as the best indicators of a child's language bank for reading - - not oral evaluations. Most children come to school with extensive listening vocabularies so that vocabulary development per se is not usually a major goal of beginning reading, but any specific word to be taught as a "reading word" should first be in a child's listening vocabulary. The "listening language" of the child and that of his reading experiences should be compatible.

14. Parents of "not yet" children need considerable counseling and understanding guidance. Often parents insist that children be taught skills for which they are not ready. Such parents need help in learning something of the nature of the reading process and the importance of each child's acquiring this process at a rate that matches his own developmental rhythms.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Our goal in this decade is success in reading for every child. Preconceived ideas about grade levels and given standards for given ages are barriers to attainment of this goal and should be replaced with the realization that success in any task is more possible if its components are clearly understood and if carefully prescribed instruction is provided. It is estimated that whereas approximately one in four children is unsuccessful in reading at some time during the elementary years, we can reduce this number to no more than one in twenty if we "program for success." Such programming should be begun the day the child enters school and be continued throughout his developmental life there.

Are You Concerned?

Take any school day of the year, and you will find 13,000 kids of school-age in correctional institutions and another 100,000 in jail or police lockups.

The state of Virginia spends $3877 to maintain a student in an institution for juvenile delinquents.

James A. Harris, President, NEA

INCREASING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT BY TEACHER INCENTIVE PAYMENTS - - YEAR III

Mr. Royce Quarles, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Evelyn Murray, Director, Title III
Bristol Public Schools
222 Oak Street
Bristol, Virginia 24201

and

Dr. Milton Jacobson
School of Education
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

OBJECTIVE

This project utilized teacher incentive payments to increase student achievement gains in reading and to increase children's self-concepts and attitudes toward learning to read.

METHODOLOGY

The population for the study consisted of 450 students in grades one through eight of the Bristol, Virginia Schools who were one or more years behind in reading achievement. In this, the third year of a three-year USOE Title III project, teachers were paid incentives based on student achievement.

Student achievement was based on both criterion referenced measures and norm referenced measures. Expected gains for each student on norm reference measures were calculated by the Fromkin-Piccarielli or the Harris formulas. Teacher incentive payments of up to a maximum of $900 per class of sixty students could be based on $90 increments for each twenty per cent increase in average grade equivalent gain above the average expected gain.

At the beginning of the term the teachers specified the number of performance objectives each student was expected to master at the seventy-five per cent proficiency level. The average number of objectives to be mastered by each student was set at forty to forty-five. An incentive payment of $1,000 per class was made to the teacher if the students mastered the prescribed number of objectives with incremental payments of $150 for each ten per cent increase over that prescribed. The maximum payment for the objective mastery was $1,300 per teacher.

To insure against undue teacher pressure for obtaining student gains, each classroom was evaluated in two ways to determine if a positive learning climate was maintained. Children's development of a positive attitude toward reading was measured by the "Affective Reading Index." Task orientation and performance attitude were measured by informal observation, interview, and observation with PROSE-LC / II. In addition, children's self-concept was pilot studied with an instrument entitled "Self-Perception."

The split-half reliability of the Affective Reading Index was 0.86.

A total of 1045 behaviors were observed employing the PROSE instrument. Frequency counts and percentages were generated for each category. Of four models of ideal behavior, one, consisting of a child working on his own initiative with materials in a sustained orientation and with positive or neutral affect, was computed. The second model delimits peer interactions, cooperating on instructional tasks. The third and fourth models deal with teacher-pupil interaction.

The "Self-Perception" instrument was administered and item analyzed to produce factors. Three factors were seen to comprise Self-Concept. They are: Factor 1 - - Self to Self; Factor 2 - - Self to Social Norms; and Factor 3 - - Self to Others. The analysis related these three factors to the four models defined by the PROSE instrument.

RESULTS

On the standardized reading achievement tests the students made an average gain of nine and four months (9.4). This exceeded by more than four months the average expected gain of five and one-third months. Teacher incentive payments ranged from $374.67 to $900.00 with an average of $701.04.

On the criterion reference measures all teachers reached the criterion level for student mastery of the prescribed objectives. In addition, all but one teacher exceeded the prescribed level by more than thirty per cent and attained the maximum incentive payment of $1,300.00. The average payment for objective mastery was $1,214.29, with 5,169 objectives assigned with ninety-two per cent mastery.

These excellent gains in reading achievement were accomplished while maintaining a positive classroom learning climate. Affective Index Scores were significantly higher than were those of a control group and were significantly more positive than in the preceding two years of the project. Classroom behavior was primarily of the ideal independent, task-oriented model. Finally, self-concept scores were high. This analysis indicated that the classroom climate was almost totally individualized. In fact, there was a lack of cooperation between peers and a lack of use of the teacher as a resource. Thus the classroom climate has evolved from a partially individualized instructional program in the first year to a program in the third year that may have too much individualization.

Bristol, Virginia Schools have implemented many aspects of the individualized program, e.g., diagnostic and prescriptive teaching, contracts with parents and students, and community involvement.

A Good Buy

A new special report on the nation's reading crisis has been prepared by the editors of Education USA. The report entitled **Reading: Issues and Actions: Current Trends in School Policies and Programs**, 1974, is available from the National School Public Relations Assn., 1801 N. Moore Street, Arlington, Va. 22209. Price is $6.75.

PERCEPTUAL-PSYCHOMOTOR-VOCATIONAL READING PROJECT

Ms. Evelyn Murray, Director, Title III
Bristol Public Schools
222 Oak Street
Bristol, Virginia 24201

For years school psychologists and reading diagnosticians have found many children with difficulties in visual memory, visual discrimination, eye-hand coordination, balance, and general coordination.

Test results have indicated the deficiencies, but left the teachers with the problem of eliminating these deficiencies. Further, the children suffered the consequences of being unable to cope with the educational experiences expected of them.

This story is different in the nation today. Well-planned perceptual-psychomotor programs are being organized, and research is available for educators to examine and study.

Research done in the area of perceptual-motor theory holds that each child normally must pass successively through stages of neuromuscular development during childhood. If one or more of these stages is omitted or underdeveloped, then the child will have trouble with appropriate motor responses which may cause him difficulty in normal academic progress, specifically with reading, speech, spelling, and writing. The theory is that a program of selected perceptual-motor activities can help develop the missed stages, thus providing a better basis for normal academic achievement.

It is an innovative program designed for prevention and remediation of the perceptual-psychomotor deficiences.

One of these programs in the nation is the new Title III project, Perceptual-Psychomotor and Vocational Reading, in Bristol, Virginia, financed by the State Department of Education. It is an innovative program designed for prevention and remediation of the perceptual-psychomotor deficiences. It is an intensive and comprehensive multi-disciplinary approach of working with pre-schoolers, primary children, teenagers, and with their parents.

Through innovative instruction, built around the skills essential for effective reading, the project provides educational activities that will raise the achievement and goals of children and their families. Emphasis is on prevention of conditions that contribute to educational problems.

The objectives of the Perceptual-Psychomotor project are: (1) to prepare pre-school children ages two to four for the transition from home to school; (2) to increase learning potential by strengthening the perceptual-psychomotor functioning of the students, age two to four, kindergarten and grade one, and grades nine through twelve; (3) to help the high school student achieve effectively in an individualized program in English-reading, using a diagnostic and prescriptive approach; (4) to help the beginning student diagnosed as having psychomotor-perceptual problems achieve through an individualized program stressing learning through movement; (5) to improve the self-concept of the student, and reduce rates of failure through changed behavior; (6) to improve the vocational-vocabulary and technical reading of the students in high school for the transition to the world of work; and (7) to improve school-community cooperation and parent involvement in education.

There are two-hundred twenty-five students in the new project: forty-five students ages 2-4; ninety students in kindergarten and grade one; and ninety students in grades nine through twelve.

Five reading specialists and five assistant teachers work with these students. Tutors from the community and colleges assist the staff and director.

The pre-schoolers, kindergarten and first graders' highest priority has been assigned to the development and implementation of a carefully planned extensive and intensive perceptual-psychomotor training program. Such a program attempts to reduce the effects of perceptual-motor problems on the learning process of children. These young children are given special instruction in perceptual-motor training. The special centers are equipped with physical education equipment as well as perceptual learning materials.

The high school program stresses reading-English skills. Vocational reading modules have been developed which involve the students in psychomotor experiences, and a small portion of the program is devoted to reading about sports.

The students involve themselves in sports activities that they have learned from reading, e.g., tennis, bowling, and ping pong.

A mobile van visits the homes of the pre-school children ages two to four, emphasizing perceptual-psychomotor skills.

The program combines the cognitive, psychomotor and affective objectives in developing the program. The objectives are developed around these topics: visual motor, auditory motor, conceptualization through movement, language development and social experiences.

The staff develops weekly packets for the parents which contain a description of the skills to be taught, directions for teaching the skills, and the material necessary for teaching the lessons. The parents return their assignment sheet and denote how well they have done for the week.

A lending library provides the parents with educational toys, books, and records that can be borrowed. Parents also "check out" cassette players, viewers, and filmstrips to view, gaining further help in teaching their children at home.

Workshops are organized for the parents. These workshops are held on the van, in the parents' homes or in the schools. The parents are taught how to teach their children the skills of "learning how to learn" through play. The students, their teachers, and parents go to the YMCA twice a week to exercise and swim.

Criterion reference tests have been developed by the staff for evaluating the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective objectives which the staff wrote for their diagnostic and prescriptive program. Standardized tests for assessing growth in the psychomotor and cognitive areas were

administered to the project group and control group. Instruments have also been administered for checking changed behavior of the students in the project.

The aim of the project is to combine the three domains: psychomotor, cognitive, and affective, in a comprehensive program developed for prevention and remediation of learning.

The program is evaluated by the Bureau of Educational Research Methodology at the University of Virginia.

Dropouts

CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

Region	Children Out of School	Portion of School-age Population
Northeast	352,641	3.4 per cent
West	266,471	3.4 per cent
North Central	446,299	3.5 per cent
South	833,827	5.9 per cent

Source: Washington Research Project, "Children Out of School in America," 1974. Based on children ages 7-17.

DID YOU KNOW?????

that the IRA Convention will be held May 13-16, 1975 at the Americana and Hilton Hotels in New York City.

that Norman Cousins will be one of the featured speakers at the IRA Convention.

that the IRA publishes annotated bibliographies; convention publications; publications produced cooperatively by IRA with Eric Crier, Eric RCS, or the National Reading Center; perspectives in reading; reading aids, selected IRA reprints; special interest publications; and world congress proceedings.

that the Right to Read campaign is a national effort to eliminate illiteracy. It involves state, local, private, and federal contributions. One objective is to focus national attention on the fact that approximately 26 million Americans lack the single most important skill for coping with life in a technological society - - reading.

The Shenandoah Reading Council is sponsoring a reading conference on April 11-12, 1975 in Chandler Hall, Madison College, Harrisonburg, Virginia. Dr. John Manning of the University of Minnesota will speak on the "Role of the Administrator in Reading Programs." Please write to Dr. Shirley Merlin, Coordinator, Reading Center, Madison College, Harrisonburg, Va. 22801 for further information.

EPIE

EPIE is Educational Products Information Exchange Institute, a nonprofit, consumer-supported agency chartered by the Regents of the University of the State of New York.

EPIE Report: Number 62/63 is a "how-to" guide for analyzing instructional materials in reading in relation to local programs and resources.

EPIE Report: Number 64 provides analyses of 76 commercially available reading materials, prepared by EPIE's National Task Force of reading specialists.

This reading "SET" (62/63 and 64) is available at a cost of $40.00. Write to EPIE Institute, 463 West Street, New York, New York 10014.

NUMBER 1

The Fourth Annual Longwood College Reading Institute will be held on Saturday, September 20, 1975 in Farmville, Virginia. Two outstanding speakers have agreed to present their views to those participating in the Institute. For further information, write to the editors of **Reading in Virginia**.

National Assessment of Educational Progress

According to the 1972 report of the National Assessment of Educational Progress on reading, the results suggest strongly that the reading problem in the United States, although formidable, may not be as great as many persons had believed! J. Stanley Ahmann, National Assessment staff director, said the test makers had expected most of the approximately 100,000 students tested (from ages 13-35) to be able to answer correctly some 50 per cent of the test exercises. Yet, the final rate of success was about 70 per cent!

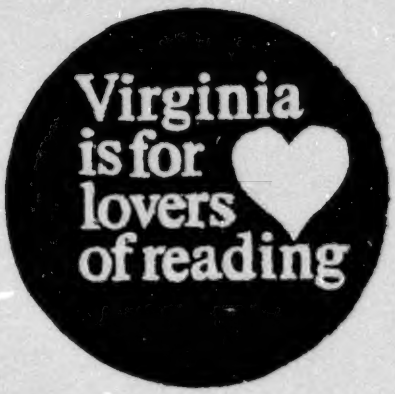
THE SNAKE

Slithering snake so **long** and **thin**
Moving so **close** to the ground.
How can you **bend** and **twist** in your skin
Sliding without a sound?

Many concepts and movements (see those which are bold in the above poem, for example) can be taught and explored using exciting and intriguing poems. Such poems are a great incentive for thinking and moving.

Children learn to understand what words mean more quickly through movement than sitting still at a desk. A teacher can help teach concepts through fun poems to which children can relate.

Miss Carol Myers
Elementary Physical Education Teacher
Fox and Southampton Schools
Richmond Public Schools
Richmond, Virginia



Do You Know a Statistic?

There are nearly 2 million school-aged children who are not in school. Most of them live in the large cities.

Of the students who are attending classes, more of them will spend some portion of their lives in a correctional institution than those who will attend all the institutions of higher learning.

Of every 100 students attending school across the nation, 23 drop out, 77 graduate from high school, 43 enter college, 21 receive a B.A., 6 earn an M.A. and 1 earns a Ph.D.

James A. Harris, President
National Education Association

INTERACTION

"Reading is not a mechanical thing, not simply a matter of recognizing words, it is the meaning, the emotions, the communication of ideas . . ., no machine can replace the interaction of human being to human being. The Teacher is the key to excellence."

Dr. Wilson Riles
California Superintendent of
Public Instruction
(Reported in **Reading Today, International**, July, 1974

Dyslexia

Dr. Rudolph F. Wagner, Chief Psychologist for the city of Richmond Public Schools has published a book entitled **DYSLEXIA: A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS.** Write to Harper and Row, Publishers, 49 E. 33rd St., New York, N.Y. 10016 for further information. Publication date is 1971.

Correct Spelling

Have you read Dr. Edmund Henderson's article in the November, 1974 issue of **The Reading Teacher** concerning "Correct Spelling - - An Inquiry"? Dr. Henderson is Director of the McGuffey Reading Clinic of the University of Virginia.

Power Reading

Dr. James L. Laffey, Professor, Department of Education, Madison College, Harrisonburg, Virginia is one of the authors of **THE POWER READING SYSTEM**, published by Winston Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Wet Cement

Almost every child would learn to write sooner if allowed to do his homework on wet cement!

A CLOSING THOUGHT

"THAT WHEN CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT TO READ, THEY LEARN TO READ, NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO WITH THEM . . ., AS LONG AS THE TEACHER KNOWS WHAT HE IS DOING."

Dr. William Shelton
Syracuse University
(From a speech presented at the IRA Convention in New Orleans, 1974.)